Social Circles Educator's Toolbox

Learner Handouts

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TOPIC 1: ARTISTIC & CULTURAL DISCIPLINES

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1. MINDFULNESS THROUGH ART

Theme
Self-regulation

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Mindfulness Through Art

Competencies Addressed:
Self-regulation - awareness and management of emotions, thoughts and behaviour.

Title of the Activity:
Mindful collage

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Mindful collage: the benefits of mindful collage for older adults are that it can improve cognitive function and memory.
- Engaging in a creative activity like collage can help stimulate the brain and improve cognitive skills such as attention, concentration, and problem-solving.
- This can be especially beneficial for older adults who may be experiencing age-related cognitive decline.
- Collage making can also help improve fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, which can be important for maintaining independence in daily tasks.
- Mindful collage activities can provide a fun and engaging way for older adults to exercise their brains and stay mentally sharp.

Step-by-step instructions:
- Gather materials such as magazines, newspapers, photographs, scissors, glue, and a large piece of paper or poster board
- Find a quiet, comfortable space to work in without distractions
- Take a few deep breaths and center yourself before starting the activity
- Begin by looking through the materials and selecting images or words that resonate with you
- Cut out the images and words that you are drawn to and arrange them on the paper or poster board

- Play around with different layouts and combinations until you feel satisfied with the overall look
- Take breaks as needed to reflect on the imagery and words you have chosen
- Use the act of creation as a form of meditation, focusing on the present moment and the process of expressing yourself through collage
- Once you have completed the collage, take some time to sit with it and reflect on what it means to you
- Consider writing down any thoughts or insights that arise from the activity to further deepen your understanding of yourself and your journey

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Collage for Self-Compassion
https://www.juliareeve.co.uk/post/multi-sensory-mindfulness

Creative Collages
Creative Collages (Mindfulness/Sensory-Based Learning - Visual)

Artmaking for mindfulness and self care
Mindful Collage — Mel Rye

Creative and Powerful Mindfulness Project With Mixed Media Art Journaling
Creative And Powerful Mindfulness Project With Mixed Media Art Journaling - Artful Haven

Self-reflection Questions:
How does the final composition of your collage reflect your inner thoughts or feelings?

Did you find this activity to be a helpful tool for self-reflection and contemplation?

How could you incorporate mindful collage into your regular self-care routine?

What new insights or perspectives have you gained about yourself through the process of creating a mindful collage?

How do you plan to continue exploring self-reflection and mindfulness through creative activities like collage-making in the future?

Template (if required)

2. EXPLORING DIVERSE CULTURES THROUGH FOOD, MUSIC

Theme
Artistic and Cultural Disciplines

Estimated Duration (mins):
120 min

Topic
Exploring Diverse Cultures Through Food, Music

Competencies Addressed:
Flexibility
Ability to manage transitions and uncertainty, and to face challenges
Explore new things

Title of the Activity:
Research and explore food and music

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Learning about different cultures, traditions, and music can help improve cognitive function and memory in older adults. It can challenge their minds and help to keep them mentally active
- Trying different types of foods and engaging in music and dance can be physically beneficial for older adults. It encourages physical movement and can help improve overall physical well-being.
- Exploring diverse cultures through food and music can ignite creativity and provide a sense of self-expression for older adults. They may discover new interests, talents, and ways to express themselves.
- Learning about different cultures can increase awareness and appreciation for diversity among older adults. It can help them develop a more open-minded and inclusive perspective towards others.

Step-by-step instructions:
- Research different cultures and their cuisines: Start by exploring various cultures and researching the types of foods and music that are most associated with each culture. Use books, online resources, documentaries, and even visit local cultural events or restaurants to learn more about different cultural practices.
- Make a list of foods and music to explore: After researching various cultures, make a list of specific foods and music that you want to explore further.
- Experiment with cooking and listening to music: Try cooking traditional dishes from the selected cultures and listening to music from those regions. Follow recipes, watch tutorials, listen to traditional music while preparing and enjoying the meal.
- Finally, document the learning journey by keeping a journal, creating a scrapbook, or sharing the experiences on social media. Write about the recipes you have tried, the music you have listened to, and the insights you have gained from exploring diverse cultures through food and music. This documentation can serve as a valuable resource for future reference and inspire others to embark on similar self-directed learning experiences.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Understanding Culture through Food
Understanding Culture through Food - Lets Eat The World

Top 8 Food Cultures to Discover Around the World
Top 8 Food Cultures to Discover Around the World | Zicasso

Swedish food culture - local produce, international flavours and forward thinking
Swedish cuisine combines local ingredients and global flavours | Visit Sweden

Self-reflection Questions:
How did the experience of exploring diverse cultures through food and music make you feel?

Did you learn anything new or surprising about different cultures through this activity?

Were there any similarities or differences you noticed between the various cultures you explored?

What steps can you take to continue exploring and learning about different cultures through food and music in the future?

Template (if required)

3. UNDERSTANDING OTHERS THROUGH STORYTELLING

Theme
Understanding Others Through Storytelling

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Storytelling

Competencies Addressed:
Empathy - the understanding of another person's emotions, experiences and values, and the provision of appropriate responses

Title of the Activity:
Understanding Others Through Storytelling

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Engaging in storytelling activities can help older adults improve their memory, attention, and cognitive function.
- By listening and sharing stories, older adults can boost their cognitive skills and keep their minds active.
- Storytelling activities provide older adults with opportunities to connect with others and build relationships. Sharing personal experiences, memories, and emotions through storytelling can help foster a sense of community and belonging.
- Storytelling allows older adults to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a creative and meaningful way. This can help them process difficult emotions, cope with stress, and find a sense of catharsis and healing.
- Storytelling can help older adults learn about different cultures, traditions, and perspectives. By listening to diverse stories and narratives, older adults can expand their understanding of the world and develop greater empathy and compassion for others.
- Engaging in storytelling activities can encourage older adults to reflect on their own experiences, values, and beliefs. This self-reflection can lead to personal growth, self-awareness, and a greater sense of purpose and meaning in life.

Step-by-step instructions:

This activity encourages participants to develop empathy and understanding by exploring the stories of others. Through storytelling, individuals can share their unique experiences, perspectives, and cultures, allowing for a deeper appreciation of diversity.

Materials Needed

Paper and pens or digital devices for writing

Steps

Preparation Phase (1 hour)

Reflect on your own story: Write down key life experiences that have shaped who you are. Focus on moments of challenge, joy, learning, and growth. Consider how these experiences might resonate with others and what lessons they hold.

Research Phase (1 hour)

Explore stories from various cultures and backgrounds. This could involve reading books, watching documentaries, listening to podcasts, or engaging in community conversations.

Take notes on storytelling styles and techniques. Pay attention to how different narratives create connections and evoke emotions.

Storytelling Development (2 hours)

Create your story: Organise your personal experiences into a cohesive narrative. Consider the structure (beginning, middle, end), themes, and key messages.

Practice your storytelling: Rehearse your story aloud, focusing on voice modulation, pacing, and emotional delivery. You can do this alone or with a friend for feedback.

Sharing Stories (2-3 hours)

Arrange a storytelling circle with friends, family, or community members. Each participant will have the opportunity to share their story.

Ensure that the environment is supportive and respectful. Set ground rules for active listening (e.g., no interruptions, support each other).

After each storyteller shares, allow time for questions and reflections. This fosters a deeper connection and understanding of each story.

Reflection (1 hour)

After the storytelling session, take time to reflect on the experience. Write down your thoughts and feelings about what you learned from others' stories and how they impacted your perspective.

Consider the following prompts:
How did hearing about others people's experiences change your understanding of their perspectives?
How can storytelling be a tool for empathy in everyday life?

Conclusion
This self-directed learning activity emphasises the power of storytelling in fostering empathy and understanding among individuals from different backgrounds. By sharing and listening to personal narratives, participants can build bridges across cultures and experiences, enriching their perspectives and enhancing their social connections.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Storytelling techniques
8 Classic storytelling techniques for engaging presentations

Your guide to what storytelling is and how to be a good storyteller
How to Be A Good Storyteller: 9 Tactics to Try

What Is Storytelling?
What Is Storytelling? - National Storytelling Network

What is Storytelling?
https://youtu.be/o14el_l9InE

Self-reflection Questions:
What insights or new understandings did you gain about the individuals you engaged with through storytelling?

In what ways did sharing personal stories impact your empathy and compassion towards others?

How can you apply the lessons learned from this activity to improve your communication and relationships with others in your daily life?

How has this experience influenced your perspective on the power of storytelling as a tool for building empathy and understanding?

Template (if required)

4. ORGANISING A LOCAL CULTURAL EVENT

Theme
Artistic and Cultural Disciplines

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Organising a Local Cultural Event

Competencies Addressed:
Collaboration - engagement in group activity and teamwork acknowledging and respecting others

Title of the Activity:
Create a local cultural event

Benefit of this activity for older adults:

- Social Engagement: Organising or participating in a local event encourages social interaction, reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation. It provides opportunities to meet new people and strengthen existing relationships.
- Cognitive Stimulation: Planning an event requires organisation, problem-solving, and creativity. Engaging in such activities can help keep the mind sharp and may even reduce the risk of cognitive decline.
- Sense of Purpose: Taking on the responsibility of organising an event can give older adults a sense of purpose and fulfilment, contributing positively to their self-esteem and overall mental health.
- Community Connection: Local events foster a sense of belonging and connection to the community. Older adults can feel more integrated within their local environment, enhancing their quality of life.

By creating or participating in local events, older adults can significantly enhance their quality of life and contribute positively to their communities.

Step-by-step instructions:
- **Research and Planning:**

Identify the culture or theme to be highlighted.

Conduct research on similar events for inspiration and best practices.

- **Form an Organising Committee:**

Assemble a diverse team of volunteers or committee members with various skills and backgrounds.

- **Budgeting:**

Create a detailed budget that includes costs for venue rental, entertainment, marketing, supplies, and permits.

Identify potential sources of funding (grants, sponsorships, ticket sales).

- **Choose a Venue and Date:**

Select a location that is accessible and appropriate for the type of event.

Choose a date that does not conflict with other major local events.

- **Plan the Program:**

Curate activities, performances, workshops, and exhibitions.

Include opportunities for interactive engagement (e.g., food sampling, art exhibits).

- **Permits and Insurance:**

Obtain necessary permits and licenses from local authorities.

Consider liability insurance to protect organisers and attendees.

- **Marketing and Promotion:**

Develop a marketing plan that includes social media, flyers, community boards, and local media.
Collaborate with local influencers and organisations for further reach.

- **Engage the Community:**

Encourage local participation (performers, vendors, volunteers).

Foster a sense of ownership and pride in the event through outreach.

- **Conduct the Event:**

Ensure clear communication and coordination among team members on event day.
Monitor activities to address any issues promptly.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
How To Host Successful Community Events

The Ultimate Event Planning Guide: How to Plan an Event | Eventtia

How To Plan an Event in 10 Steps (With Helpful Tips) | Indeed.com

How to Plan an Event: The Simple Getting Started Guide
https://youtu.be/0LWeNrc4XUg

Self-reflection Questions:
What have I learned about myself through these activities?

Reviewing any difficulties I encountered—how might I address or learn from these activities?

Have I discovered anything new about my capabilities, interests, or values through this experience?

Template (if required)

5. EXPRESSING YOURSELF THROUGH CREATIVE WRITING

Theme
Artistic and Cultural Disciplines

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Creative writing

Competencies Addressed:
Growth mindset - belief in one's and others' potential to continuously learn and progress

Title of the Activity:
Words as Windows: Exploring Your Inner World

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- To enhance creative writing skills
  ◊ by expressing personal thoughts, and feelings
- Experiences through different writing styles.

Step-by-step instructions:
Introduction
Creative writing is a form of expression that allows you to share your thoughts, feelings, and views in a unique way. By tapping into your imagination and personal experiences, you can craft stories, poems, and essays that reveal who you are.

- Part 1: Warm-Up Exercise - "Stream of Consciousness"
Instructions:
Set a timer for 5 minutes.

Write continuously without pausing, editing, or worrying about grammar. Allow your thoughts to flow onto the page. Write whatever comes to mind—feelings, observations, memories, or random ideas.

Once the timer goes off, read what you've written. Highlight or underline phrases or sentences that resonate with you.

Reflection Questions:
Which phrases stood out to you, and why?
Did this exercise help you tap into your thoughts more deeply? How?

- Part 2: Select a Writing Style

Choose one of the following styles to further develop your ideas:

Short Story:

Create a fictional narrative based on one of the highlighted phrases from your warm-up. Who is the protagonist? What challenges do they face?

Consider including dialogue, setting, and sensory details to bring your story to life.

Poem:

Use the emotions or images from your warm-up as inspiration for a poem. It can be free verse, haiku, or any form that appeals to you.

Focus on vivid imagery and emotions to convey your message.

Personal Essay:

Write an essay reflecting on a personal experience related to one of your highlighted phrases. What did you learn from this experience? How did it shape you?

Use descriptive language to engage your readers and share your insights.

- Part 3: Sharing and Feedback

Instructions:

Pair up with a classmate and share your writing piece. Allow each other 5 minutes to read and discuss your work.

Provide constructive feedback focusing on what you liked, as well as suggestions for improvement.

When you receive feedback, consider how it could enhance your writing.

- Part 4: Revise and Refine

Take the feedback into account and spend some time revising your piece. Focus on clarity, emotion, and detail. Aim to make your expression as vivid and authentic as possible.

Optional Extension Activity
After revising, consider sharing your work in a class anthology or a creative writing club. You may also want to explore submission to local literary magazines or online platforms.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
6 tips for improving your creative writing.
https://youtu.be/7w2DQ0JaETk

Self-Expression through Creative Writing

How does creative writing help you process your emotions? | by Midnight Waterz | Medium

Self-Expression in Creative Writing | Writing Forward

What is Creative Writing & How to Get Started
https://youtu.be/6S7yB12Gjxs

Self-reflection Questions:
What did you learn about yourself through this writing piece?

How do you feel about the final piece you have created?

What role does writing play in your personal identity or self-discovery?

What would you do differently if you were to revisit this piece or write something new?

Template (if required)

6. ANALYSING A FAMOUS PAINTING

Theme
Artistic and Cultural Disciplines

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Analysing a Famous Painting

Competencies Addressed:
Critical thinking - assessment of information and arguments to support reasoned conclusions and develop innovative solutions.

Title of the Activity:
Learn how to analyse a famous painting

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- The process of analysing a painting encourages critical thinking and stimulates cognitive functions. It requires observing details, interpreting colours and forms, and considering the historical and cultural context, which can help keep the mind active.
- Art analysis can evoke emotions and personal reflections. Discussing feelings about a painting fosters emotional expression and may help older adults process their own experiences and memories, contributing to overall emotional well-being.
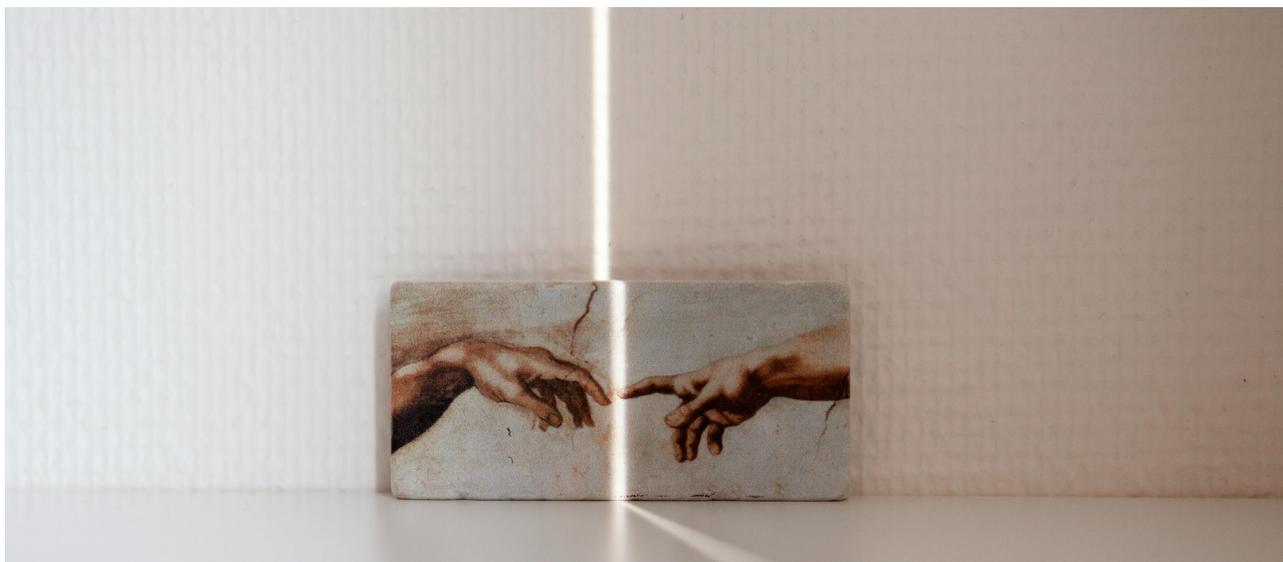
Step-by-step instructions:
Introduction
Art analysis is an engaging way to deepen your understanding of a painting's meaning, context, and impact. This handout will guide you through the essential steps to analyse a famous painting critically.
Use the painting - Vincent van Gogh's "Starry Night"

Steps to Analyse a Painting
1. Observation
Initial Impression: Look at the painting without thinking too much. What is your first feeling or thought?
Visual Analysis:
Subject Matter: What is depicted? (people, objects, nature, etc.)
Composition: How are the elements arranged? (balance, symmetry, focus points)
Colours: What colours are used? Are they warm or cool? How do they affect the mood?
Lines and Shapes: What types of lines are present (straight, curves, jagged)? What shapes dominate the painting?

2. Contextual Analysis
Artist Background: Research the artist's biography. What were their influences, style, and notable works?
Historical Context:
Time Period: When was the painting created? What major events were happening in the world at that time?
Cultural Context: What cultural or social factors might have influenced the painting?
Movement: What art movement does the painting belong to? (e.g., Impressionism, Surrealism, Baroque)

3. Thematic Analysis
Themes: What themes are present in the painting? (e.g., love, conflict, nature, identity)
Symbols: Are there any symbols or allegorical elements? What do they represent?
Emotion and Mood: What emotions does the painting evoke? How does the artist achieve this?

4. Personal Reflection
Personal Response: How does the painting resonate with you? What thoughts or feelings does it provoke?
Critical Perspective: Consider the effectiveness of the painting. Does it succeed in conveying its message? Why or why not?

5. Putting It All Together
Structure Your Analysis

When writing your analysis, consider the following structure:

Introduction:

Title of the painting, artist, and date.

Brief overview of the painting's significance.

Observation:

Describe your visual analysis findings.

Discuss composition, color, and lines.

Contextual Analysis:

Summarise the artist's background and the historical context.

Explain the art movement and its relevance to the painting.

Thematic Analysis:

Identify and explain the painting's themes and symbols.

Discuss the emotions evoked by the artwork.

Personal Reflection:

Share your personal thoughts and the impact that the painting had on you.

Offer a critical evaluation of the painting's success.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:

How to do a Visual Analysis || Art History

https://youtu.be/3QXHsM00_Yk

How to analyze a painting - a practical example

How to analyze an artwork: a step-by-step guide for students

Video art analys – attached material

Self-reflection Questions:

What new insights or knowledge have you gained from this activity and video that you can apply to your understanding of art in general?

How has this activity challenged your views or assumptions about art?

How has your perspective on your own creativity or artistic expression changed as a result of the activities?

Template (if required)

TOPIC 2: TIME AND BUDGET MANAGEMENT

TOPIC 2: TIME AND BUDGET MANAGEMENT

1. SETTING AND STICKING TO A WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Theme
Time management

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Setting and Sticking to a Weekly or Monthly Schedule

Competencies Addressed:
Self-reflection
Wellness

Title of the Activity:
Beyond the routine: I do what is good for me and I enjoy

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
The benefits that can be achieved are:
- Reflection on how time is spent daily and monthly, both individually and through group activities.
- Identify how free time is currently used in daily routines.
- Learn about new activities and interests and share ideas with the group.
- Assess priorities in relation to commitments, interests, relationships, experience, and motivation.
- The priorities chosen will be included in your project planning.
- Develop a schedule that focuses on physical and social health and less on sedentary life and isolation.
- Build awareness of how time and resources can be used more efficiency.

Step-by-step instructions:
Step 1. Write a list of all your daily activities/commitments and how much time you spend on them. Do the same for weekly and monthly commitments/activities.

Step 2. Design your schedule: identify the activities and commitments that need to be done daily.

Step 3. To help in this task, download a planner template that you can use from Canva (link below).

Step 4. In your planner, record these tasks on a weekly/monthly basis. Arrange them by priority and make sure you allow a realistic timeframe for each one, so you can avoid underestimates.

Step 5. Once your planner is mapped out, take a moment to review it. Look for time-windows where you can insert activities that support your physical and mental well-being.

Step 6. Fill the new time-windows with new activities that you enjoy doing.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Free weekly/monthly planner templates:
https://www.canva.com
Benefits and time management strategies:
https://asana.com/it/resources/time-management-tips
https://itsgoodtobehomeinc.care/10-key-tips-for-time-management-for-the-elderly/
https://osmpartnermc2.com/time-management-la-gestione-efficace-del-tempo
https://www.cohme.org/post/helping-older-adults-with-time-management
The Alpen method for time management:
https://www.timetrackapp.com/en/blog/alpen-method/
Brain Exercises to Strengthen Your Mind
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCpiteBel8E
https://www.verywellmind.com/brain-exercises-to-strengthen-your-mind-2795039
13 Brain Exercises to Help Keep You Mentally Sharp
https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/brain-exercises#meditate
YouTube video of sitting exercises:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BcPHWGQO44
Games and activities for seniors
https://www.nsw.gov.au/community-services/seniors-card/games-and-activities

Self-reflection Questions:
How useful was this time management exercise for you?

Do you think that now that you have an achievable weekly/monthly planner identified, you can see where you can slot in activities that you enjoy doing for yourself ?

Template (if required)
Weekly planner templates:
https://www.canva.com/it_it/planner/modelli/settimanale/

2. RETIREMENT BUDGETING: SIMPLIFYING FINANCES

Theme
Time and Budget Management

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Retirement budgeting: Simplifying Finances

Competencies Addressed:
P2 Flexibility
P1 Self-Regulation

Title of the Activity:
My Monthly Budget

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Increased awareness of the types of personal income and expenses incurred in your household.
- Provide a schedule of expenditure in relation to revenue
- Finding a coherent balance between needs and available financial cover
- Achieving a more relaxed and positive relationship with money.

Step-by-step instructions:

This autonomous learning activity begins by choosing your preferred format between paper and digital. If you prefer paper, we recommend the use of a notebook dedicated to recording your accounts, if digital an Excel worksheet is recommended.

In both cases the steps to be followed are as follows:

Step 1. Record your regular expenses and the dates on which they occur.
If you don't have a system to manage your income and expenses, try reconstructing the previous month's outgoings.

Use the chronological approach to record income and expenditure with a brief description of the transaction and an indication of the monetary amount involved.

Step 2. Using your records, try to simulate a forecast for the next month.
Carefully assess whether or not:
- There are any fixed payment deadlines.
- Unexpected expenses provision.
- Are there any expenses you could reduce?
- Can you increase your income?
- Can you set aside some savings?

Step 3. Define a clear monthly budget that balances expenses with income. Whether you use a notebook or spreadsheet, set your budget according to this example, one that is the most convenient and easy to update. Also set up a weekly or monthly routine for recording your income and expenses to have better control over your finances.

This healthy habit of controlling your finances allows you to have a better understanding of your expenses, which will give you peace of mind when handling your own finances.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
In Turin (Italy) they established the Museum of Savings, an institution committed to financial literacy through educational activities dedicated especially to children and young people:
https://www.museodelrisparmio.it/home-en/

The OECD's International Network of Financial Education, in collaboration with the Central Banks, carries out statistical surveys on the level of adult literacy (site and documents are in English):
https://www.oecd.org/en/networks/infe.html

On the OECD website you can find out about the situation in countries around the world:
https://www.oecd.org/en/countries.html

In Italy, the Banca d'Italia publishes a report on the level of financial literacy in the adult population in Italy; the 2023 report can be downloaded here:
https://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/tematiche/indagini-famiglie-imprese/alfabetizzazione/index.html

The OECD's International Comparison Report is available in English for 2023:
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023/12/oecd-infe-2023-international-survey-of-adult-financial-literacy_8ce94e2c.html

Self-reflection Questions:
Are there any financial concepts or terms that are still unclear to you? Could you explain inflation, budgeting, or financial risk?

Have you understood what behaviours are the most effective for you to control your budget, set financial goals, meet financial requests and to plan income and expenses in the short and medium term?

Are you aware of your attitude towards money in the medium to long term? For example, do you agree with the benefits of saving and do you understand your attitude towards good money management?

Template (if required)
Examples of financial budgets (sheet in Excel and Word).

3. INVESTING YOUR TIME IN THE COMMUNITY

Theme
Time and Budget Management

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Investing your time in the community

Competencies Addressed:
Well-being
Perceived self-efficacy

Title of the Activity:
Mapping Opportunities in my Community.

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
The benefits of this activity are:
- They will identify opportunities for volunteering in the older persons location.
- They will select voluntary associations in line with their interests and hobbies.
- They will create relationships with interested groups in the community.
- They will allow for motivation that will support activation
- They can be used for sharing information
- They can focus on building a sense of community

Step-by-step instructions:
This activity can be carried out individually, but it is preferable to do it in a group setting:
1. Divide participants into groups, according to their area of interest. Some suggestions are:
Sport and leisure, dance and theatre, music, choirs and bands, museums, historical monuments and archaeological sites, libraries.
Volunteering in some areas like, hospitals, schools, after-school clubs.
Volunteering within the parish, looking at environmental projects, supporting older people, for example helping with shopping, dog walking etc.

2. Working in small groups, the participants will discuss and compare their knowledge and experience of the local area and places of interest. They can share their own view on the neighbourhood in a participatory way. Some examples of places to discuss are, parishes, municipalities, volunteering centres.

3. The exploration can continue with a guided search on the internet (using tools such as Google Maps)

4. After collecting information, each group will create a "map of opportunities" based on a poster or other mediums available and then integrate it with the maps produced by other groups.

5. In smaller groups, participants will be able to design their own route through the neighbourhood, looking for spaces and places where voluntary activities could take place.

6. Finally, participants can think about what they have discovered about their neighbourhood, considering ways and strategies to care for the local area and the people who live there.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Introducing the Tea for Change Handbook: Equipping Grandmothers to Drive Social Change
https://www.grandmothercollective.org/resources/tea-for-change
Examples of volunteer programmes to look for in your community
https://www.liveatwhitestone.org/news/best-
Volunteering - the beneficial side effects | Eric Cooper | TEDxSanAntonio
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbV1TDZQAFc&t=17s
Volunteer templates
https://create.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/volunteering
Examples of interactive maps
https://mapme.com/interactive-map-examples/
Explore your neighbourhood with Google maps
https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=SJBbHe9r75I

Self-reflection Questions:
- Have you thought about whether you want to engage in an activity that you have experience in or a completely new one?
- Do you think you could benefit from finding interesting activities that you could partake in during your free time?
- How can you apply your knowledge of local places, spaces, and organisations that need volunteers, and what strategies could you use to do so?

Template (if required)

4. FINANCIAL SECURITY: RECOGNISING AND AVOIDING SCAMS

Theme
Time and budget management

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Financial security: Recognising and avoiding scams

Competencies Addressed:
Select 1 or 2 competencies from the LifeComp Framework
Critical thinking

Title of the Activity:
Critical thinking as the Number 1 enemy of scams

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Development of critical thinking skills to avoid scams.
- Use strategies to verify the legitimacy of offers and communications.
- Acquisition of a method to recognise scams and react consciously.
- Self-protective behaviour.

Step-by-step instructions:
Step 1: *Exercise "Stop and Reflect" (alone or in a group). This exercise can also be practiced through role-playing)*

1. **Read the proposed case of a suspicious situation (collect case-studies from the group or use the example below): e.g. A phone call asking to send money urgently for a family member in distress.**
   ◊ "my sister, who is in her 90s, receives an alarming phone call from a so-called lawyer. Your daughter, says this gentleman has hit another car and is now in the police station, they have withdrawn the license and raised a fine that she is not able to pay: They therefore need two thousand euros immediately to settle the issue of damages, I send my secretary home

to collect the money or to accompany me to the bank; the so-called lawyer has added other details, for example the number of the police to contact (an accomplice, and a fake policeman)."

2. **Take a moment to consider what actions you would take, or discuss your ideas with your group, Then write down each step along with your observations.**

3. **Read the recommended steps below:**
   01. **Stop:** Do not act immediately. Scams are successful because they appear credible and often come at times when you're distracted or busy. Scams start with unexpected contacts, urgent requests or personal data. Criminals rely on haste, fear of losing an opportunity or misplaced trust!
   02. **Identify manipulative emotions:** Scammers create urgency or fear to push you into immediate action. Stay calm and think before you answer.
   03. **Analyse the sources:** Verify the reliability of the sender. Check whether the phone number matches a known or unknown one or the email address. Avoid suspicious links and untraceable payments. Fraudsters exploit new technology or high-impact events to build compelling stories, prompting you to provide money, personal details or banking information. Critical thinking skills are the most powerful tools to be used against scams. Trust your instincts!
   04. **Check for inconsistencies:** Requests for personal information, such as bank details, or grammatical errors, suspicious links are warning signs. Be sceptical of unexpected messages, verify the authenticity of the sender, use strong passwords and multi-factor authentication.
   05. **Think about it:** Ask yourself questions like, "Do I know this person?"; "Is that a regular request?"; "Can I verify this information?".
   06. **Consider the logic of the offer:** Scams often promise easy gains or unrealistic advantages. Beware of too advantageous offers! Ask yourself, "Is it too good to be true?".
   07. **Look for external confirmation:** Consult official sources or ask people you trust before making important decisions.
   08. **Answer:** If you have doubts, stop the communication, refuse the request, block the sender and report the incident to the competent authorities (do you have the numbers in your address book to call for help and report?).

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:

https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/crime-against-elderly-four-arrests-in-germany-and-poland

https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/nearly-80-of-elderly-swiss-affected-by-fraud-in-5-years/3006090

https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/

https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/senior-citizens-frequent-fraud/

https://www.ageuk.org.uk/siteassets/documents/information-guides/ageukig05_avoiding_scams_inf.pdf

https://www.ausbanking.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Safe-and-Savvy-web.pdf

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/e84b5226-2fa7-4100-8a53-9a06592146b1/Toolkit_Critical_thinking_for_seniors_.pdf

https://www.theeducationmagazine.com/critical-thinking/

Self-reflection Questions:
- What are the early warnings signs that you should consider for a potential scam?
- Have you carefully considered the strategies you can use to protect yourself?
- How do you assess the reliability of investment communications?

Template (if required)
N.A.

5. FIND HELP WITH TIME AND BUDGET MANAGEMENT

Theme
Time and budget management

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Find help with time and budget management

Competencies Addressed:
Communication

Title of the Activity:
Looking for local resources

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Greater awareness of the resources available in the community.
- Greater autonomy in handling support requests.
- Practical ability to communicate your needs effectively.
- Identify priorities and possible areas for improvement in time and budget management.

Step-by-step instructions:

Step 1 - A practical exercise. Create a mental map of the available local resources available to you to help in managing your money, or your time. Think about where to look for these resources and how you might use them. You can simulate a search for local resources online or by phone or ask family members and acquaintances for information.

Step 2 – Fill in the Matrix below: the "Local resources in my community"

Category	Name of service/ resource	Contact (phone, email, website)	Type of support offered	How can you help me manage my time and/or money?
Familiar				
Home care				
Financial advice (Tax Assistance Centres)				
Support Groups				
Online platforms				
Voluntary organisations				
Social services of the municipality				
Senior centres and counselling centres				
Online platforms for expense or time management				
Cultural Associations				
Places of worship				

Step 3 - Reflect on these questions:

- How and where did you find this information?
- If you have ever used any of these services, what was your experience like.
- Do you see barriers that prevent you from accessing these resources?
- Can you communicate your needs clearly and respectfully to get help?

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:

It might be useful to do a specific-site search for finding useful addresses on the web: municipality, neighbourhood, health district etc .

Self-reflection Questions:

- Did this activity help you discover new local resources beyond the ones you already know about?
- Who could you reach out to in order to expand your map of useful addresses or places of interest for you?

Template (if required)

N.A.

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6. TRACKING PERSONAL PROGRESS ON GOALS

Theme
Time management and budget management

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Tracking personal progress on your goals

Competencies Addressed:
Select 1 or 2 competencies from the LifeComp Framework
Managing learning

Title of the Activity:
"I observe myself, therefore I grow"

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Learning from oneself.
- Making one's progress visible over time.
- Developing greater autonomy and daily well-being, feeling active in managing one's own life.
- Developing awareness of one's daily behaviours through self-monitoring to improve the management of time and budgeting resources.

Step-by-step instructions:
Step 1 - Read what Self-Monitoring means and why it is important:
"Self-monitoring means carefully and honestly observing how we use our time and money. This process is not used to judge us, but to learn from ourselves: It helps us understand what works, where we can improve, and which habits make us more serene and effective. It is a way to take charge of our daily lives, with responsibility and freedom".

Step 2 - Write a Self-Monitoring Diary – for 3 days take note of:
- How you use your time (e.g. how much time you dedicate to rest, physical activity, socialising, hobbies, watching TV...).
- How you manage your money (e.g. small daily expenses, useful or unnecessary purchases, savings).

You can use the simple table provided as an example to help with this task:

Day	Main activities (with timetable)	How I felt	Expenses incurred (what and how much did I spend)
Monday	9:00 walk – 10:00 shopping	Well, relaxed	€5 fruit, €3 newspaper

Step 3 - Analysis and small objectives

After 3 days, review your notes and answer the following questions:
- What have I learned about how I use my time?
- Is there something I could change to improve my time management?
- Have I spent my money consciously, or can I do better?
- What is the one small, realistic goal that I can set for the next 3 days?

Example: "I will try to reduce my TV time by half an hour a day and use that time to read or go outside."

Step 4 – Sharing your goals and progress with friends or family to increase accountability gives you a chance to offer and receive support to help you improve your strategies and reward yourself for your achievements!

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:

https://www.carepatron.com/templates/time-management-worksheets?utm_source=chatgpt.com
https://www.twinkl.it/resource/send-older-learners-time-management-skills-t-s-1686314515?utm_source=chatgpt.com
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErLvJPkQKLY

Self-reflection Questions:
- Why is it useful to self-monitor your time and money management?
- Which habits make you feel more serene or satisfied in your day? How could you protect or enhance them?
- Looking at your diary, what small unnecessary expense have you noticed? How could you reduce it or replace it with something more useful or enjoyable?

Template (if required)
N.A.

TOPIC 3: DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA
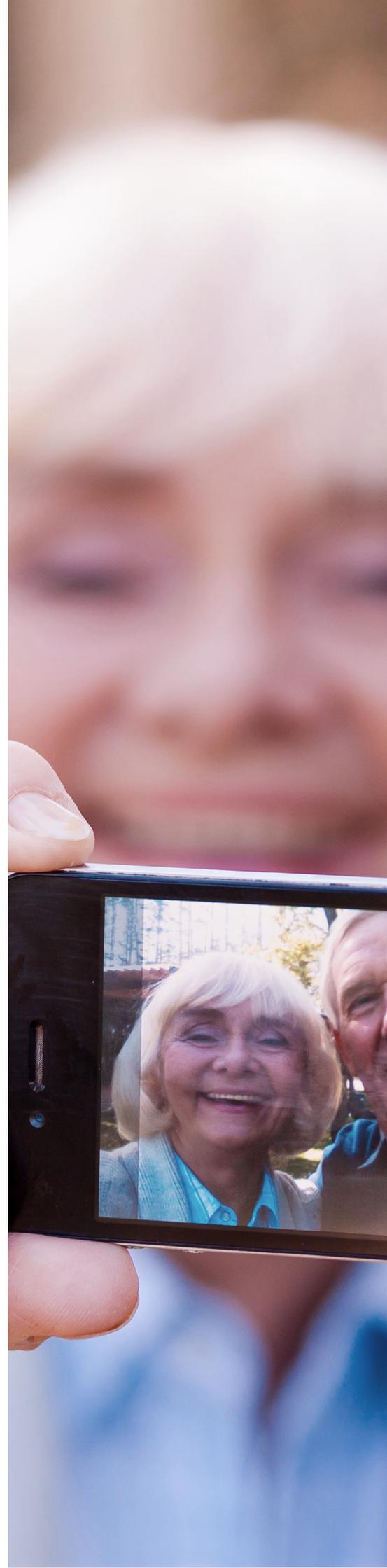
TOPIC 3: DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

1. SPOTTING FAKE NEWS ONLINE

Theme
Digital & Social Media

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Spotting Fake News Online

Competencies Addressed:
L2 – Critical Thinking

Title of the Activity:
Fact Checking in Action

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
By completing this activity, you will:
- Enhance your critical thinking skills
- Develop fact-checking skills
- Become more comfortable navigating the online environment
- Be able to assess the reliability of content and sources.
- Be more aware of the damages of misinformation and learn how to spot it
- Strengthen your decision-making competences

Step-by-step instructions:
1. You will be divided into small groups, and each group will be assigned an article.
2. You will have to identify the author, publication, sources cited, and claims made. Please check the template below.
3. Then you will cross-check claims using search engines and fact-checking tools.
4. Finally, each group will present their findings to all the participants. A discussion will take place to see which clues helped you determine the credibility of the article.

Template & Tips

How to identify a fake news article? Tips by Kapersky.

1. **Verify the Source:** Check the website's URL for errors or unusual extensions. Unknown sites should be cross-checked with their "About Us" section for more context.
2. **Evaluate the Author:** Research the author's credibility—are they reputable, knowledgeable in the subject, and transparent about any biases or agendas?
3. **Cross-check with Other Sources:** Confirm if other trusted outlets are reporting the same story and if credible sources are cited within the content.
4. **Adopt a Critical Mindset:** Fake news often evokes emotional reactions. Reflect on the article's purpose, possible bias, and its intent to drive clicks or promote a cause.
5. **Verify the Facts:** Credible news is supported by facts, expert quotes, and data. Lack of these details may signal false information. Check the article's publication date for relevance.
6. **Scrutinise the Comments:** Comments may not always be trustworthy and could be generated by bots or those pushing misleading information.
7. **Acknowledge Your Own Biases:** Be aware of your biases when evaluating stories. Social media often reinforces existing views, so consider diverse perspectives for a balanced understanding.
8. **Assess if It's Satire:** Determine whether the content is from a satirical site by checking if it's known for parody or humor.
9. **Check Image Authenticity:** Images may be altered or misused. Look for signs of manipulation or misleading context and use tools like Google Reverse Image Search to verify their origin.
10. **Use Fact-Checking Tools:** Consult reliable fact-checking websites to verify information and debunk misinformation.
    ◊ https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/general/lib/lib1/nhclib/Fake-News-WorksheetProQuest.pdf

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
https://www.kaspersky.com/resource-center/preemptive-safety/how-to-identify-fake-news
https://youtu.be/7A55c_KaBpw?si=LNZSVtjOBVcvIFBH You can activate subtitles in your language on the bottom right by clicking on the wheel.

Self-reflection Questions:
• What challenges did you face while verifying the credibility of an article?
• How do you feel about the time and effort required to fact-check information?

2 DIGITAL SAFETY : CONSENT AND PRIVACY ONLINE

Theme
Digital and Social Media

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Digital Safety : Consent and Privacy Online

Competencies Addressed:
L1- *Growth Mindset*

Title of the Activity:
Reflecting on Your Digital Footprint

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Increased awareness of your online presence.
- A clearer understanding of what personal information is publicly available.
- The ability to take action to remove or protect sensitive information.
- Greater confidence in managing your digital footprint effectively.

Step-by-step instructions:
1. Think about the platforms or apps you regularly use (e.g., email, Facebook, WhatsApp).
2. Use a search engine to look up your name and see what information is publicly available about you.
3. Write down any surprises or information you'd like to keep private.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
- Stay Safe Online – Tips for protecting your digital life.
- Facebook Privacy Basics – Step-by-step privacy settings.
- WhatsApp Privacy Settings – Official guide to safeguarding your account.

Self-reflection Questions:
- What did you learn about your digital footprint during this activity?
- How confident do you feel about adjusting privacy settings on your favorite apps?
- What steps will you take to protect the privacy of your family members, especially children?
- What will you do differently the next time you receive a suspicious message or friend request?

Course Content

CONTENT:

Chapter 1: Understanding Digital Footprints
1.1 What is a Digital Footprint?

- Definition: A digital footprint is the trail of data created while using the internet.
- Types:
  ◊ **Active footprints** (information deliberately shared, e.g., social media posts).
  ◊ **Passive footprints** (information collected without the user's direct knowledge, e.g., cookies and tracking).
- Why it matters: Digital footprints can affect personal security, reputation, and future opportunities (e.g., job prospects, school admissions).

1.2 The Risks of an Unmanaged Digital Footprint

- Identity theft and fraud.
- Unwanted tracking by advertisers.
- Reputation damage due to past posts or shared content.
- Risks to children's privacy and security.

Chapter 2: Best Practices for Online Privacy Protection
2.1 Protecting Personal and Family Privacy

- **Limit sharing:** Be cautious about posting personal details (e.g., addresses, birthdays, travel plans).
- **Strong passwords & authentication:** Use unique, complex passwords and enable two-factor authentication.
- **Recognising scams & phishing:** Learn to identify suspicious emails and messages.
- **Secure devices:** Keep software and security settings updated.
- **Teach children about privacy:** Educate them on safe sharing practices and potential online dangers.

2.2 Privacy Settings and Controls

- **Social media:** Review and adjust privacy settings regularly.
- **Web browsers:** Use private browsing modes and clear cookies.
- **Apps & permissions:** Limit access to location, contacts, and camera on mobile devices.
- **Search engines:** Use privacy-focused search engines (e.g., DuckDuckGo) and enable do-not-track features.

Chapter 3: Making Informed Choices About Online Sharing
3.1 Evaluating What to Share Online

- Consider the audience: Who can see your posts? (Public vs. friends-only settings)
- Understand long-term impact: Content online is often permanent, even if deleted.
- Avoid oversharing: Be mindful of personal details that could be misused.

3.2 Managing and Reducing Digital Footprints

- Regularly review past online activity and delete unnecessary accounts or content.
- Use tools like Google Alerts to monitor online presence.
- Opt-out of data collection services where possible.
- Consider using a VPN for added privacy.
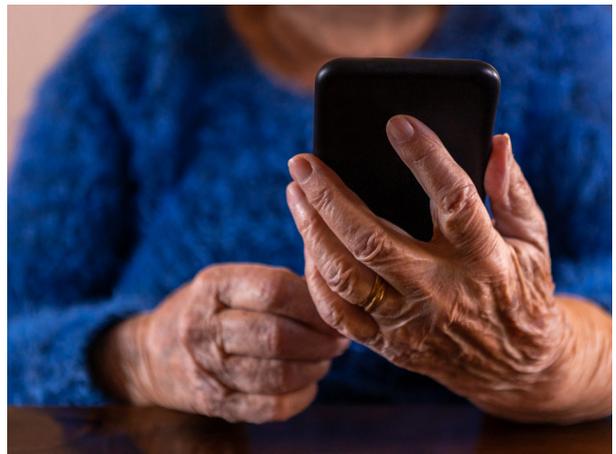
3 CREATING AN EFFECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Theme
Digital and Social Media

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Creating an Effective Social Media Post

Competencies Addressed:
LifeComp Framework
- (S2) Communication
- (P2) Flexibility

Title of the Activity:
Crafting Engaging Social Media Posts

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- *Improve digital literacy skills*
- *Increase confidence in online communication*
- *Enhance ability to connect with like-minded communities*

Step-by-step instructions:
1. **Understand Your Audience:** *Identify who you want to reach.*
2. **Keep it Concise:** *Aim for short, engaging captions.*
3. **Use a Call to Action (CTA):** *Encourage interaction (e.g., "Comment below!").*
4. **Incorporate Hashtags:** *Use 2-5 relevant hashtags to expand reach.*
5. **Add Visuals:** *Select an image or video that complements your message.*
6. **Schedule for Optimal Engagement:** *Post at peak engagement times.*
7. **Engage with Your Audience:** *Respond to comments and create interactive content.*

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
- Harvard Business Review - Social Media Engagement
- How to Write Captivating Social Media Posts
- Social Media Hashtag Strategy Guide

Self-reflection Questions:
1. Which of these techniques will you implement first, and why?
2. How do you think engagement with your social media posts will change after applying these strategies?

4 CONNECTING WITH OTHERS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES

Theme
Digital and Social Media

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Connecting with Others in Online Communities

Competencies Addressed:
[LifeComp Framework](#)
- (S1) Empathy
- (S2) Communicatio

Title of the Activity:
Engaging Empathetically in Digital Spaces

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- *Improve confidence in online discussions*
- *Learn respectful digital communication techniques*
- *Foster meaningful connections in virtual communities*

Step-by-step instructions:
1. **Observe and Understand the Community:** *Read posts and guidelines before engaging.*
2. **Contribute Respectfully:** *Share experiences, ask questions, and provide supportive comments.*
3. **Use Active Listening:** *Acknowledge others' viewpoints before responding.*
4. **Practice Digital Etiquette:** *Avoid excessive self-promotion and always credit sources.*
5. **Engage Regularly:** *Stay active and participate in meaningful discussions.*
6. **Resolve Conflicts Thoughtfully:** *Use neutral language and ask clarifying questions rather than reacting negatively.*

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
- How to Communicate Respectfully Online
- Empathy in Digital Communication
- Guidelines for Positive Online Interactions

Self-reflection Questions:
1. What is one strategy you will implement to engage more empathetically in an online community?
2. Have you encountered negative interactions online? How could they have been handled differently?

Template (if required)

5 INTRODUCTION TO AI

Theme

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Introduction to AI: Enhancing Daily Life with AI Tools

Competencies Addressed:
[LifeComp Framework](#)
- (L1) Growth Mindset – Adapting to technological advancements.
- (S2) Critical Thinking – Evaluating AI applications and ethical concerns.
- (P1) Digital Literacy – Navigating AI-powered tools effectively.

Title of the Activity:
Exploring AI for Everyday Use

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
By completing this activity, older adults will:
- *Gain a foundational understanding of AI concepts.*
- *Learn how to use AI tools to simplify daily tasks.*
- *Improve confidence in interacting with AI-driven applications.*
- *Develop critical thinking on AI's benefits and challenges.*

Step-by-step instructions:
1. Understanding AI in Simple Terms (10 min)
AI (Artificial Intelligence) helps computers learn and assist in everyday tasks. Think of AI as a smart assistant—it can answer questions, translate languages, recommend movies, or even help organise your day.

2. AI in Everyday Life (10 min)
- *Voice Assistants (Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant) – Set reminders, get weather updates, or ask for jokes.*
- *Chatbots (Customer service on websites) – Get quick answers when shopping online.*
- *Translation Tools (Google Translate, DeepL) – Instantly convert text or speech into other languages.*
- *Smart Recommendations (Netflix, YouTube, Spotify) – Suggests content based on your preferences.*
- *Health & Fitness Apps – Tracks steps, suggests workouts, and reminds you to stay hydrated.*

- *AI in Banking & Security – Detects fraud and protects online transactions.*

3. Hands-on Exploration (20 min)

Try an AI tool:

- *Voice Assistants: Ask "Hey Google, what's my schedule today?"*
- *Translation Apps: Translate a phrase into another language.*
- *AI Text Assistants: Use ChatGPT or Grammarly to correct a sentence.*
- *AI Photo Organisers: Explore Google Photos for automatic image sorting.*

Take notes on usability, benefits, and challenges as you test the tool.

4. Group Discussion (15 min)

- *Share your experience – What was easy? What was surprising?*
- *Discuss concerns – Do you trust AI? What are the risks?*
- *Compare tools – Which AI feature do you see yourself using daily?*

5. Reflection & Application (15 min)

- *Choose one AI tool to integrate into your routine.*
- *Set a goal—will AI help you with organization, learning, or communication?*
- *Think about ethical use—verify AI-generated content and protect personal data.*

Safety Tip: Always use AI from trusted sources (Google, Microsoft, etc.) and never share sensitive information with chatbots or virtual assistants.

This session demystifies AI, making it accessible and practical for everyday use!

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:

- European Commission – AI Strategy & Ethics: https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu
- How AI is Changing Everyday Life – MIT Technology Review: https://www.technologyreview.com

Self-reflection Questions:

1. What was the most interesting AI tool you learned about today?
2. How do you see AI helping you in your daily life?
3. Do you feel more comfortable exploring AI tools after this activity?
4. What concerns do you have about using AI?

Template (if required)

Handout: AI in Everyday Life

What is AI?

AI (Artificial Intelligence) helps machines learn and assist in daily tasks, making life easier and more efficient.

Where Do We See AI?
- Voice Assistants – Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant answer questions and set reminders.
- Smart Recommendations – Netflix suggests movies, YouTube recommends videos.
- Chatbots – Online customer support answers questions instantly.
- Translation Tools – Google Translate helps with different languages.
- Health & Fitness – AI tracks steps, suggests workouts, and monitors health.
- Fraud Detection – AI detects suspicious banking activity.

How AI Supports Seniors
- Simplifies daily tasks – Voice assistants manage schedules.
- Improves safety – Smart home devices detect falls.
- Enhances communication – AI helps translate and connect.
- Supports lifelong learning – AI-powered courses and tools.

AI Safety Tips
- Use trusted apps and tools.
- Protect personal data online.
- Verify AI-generated information.

- Try it! Say, "Hey Google, set a reminder for 8 AM."

6 MASTERING A NEW APP IN 30 MINUTES

Theme
Digital skills

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Mastering a New App in 30 Minutes

Competencies Addressed:
P2 (Flexibility)
- Digital Literacy
- Problem-Solving
- Confidence in Technology Use

Title of the Activity:
Downloading and Exploring a New App

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
- Gain confidence in using mobile applications.
- Improve communication and daily activities
- Increase digital independence and security awareness.

Step-by-step instructions:
- **Step 1:** Open the App Store (Google Play or Apple App Store).
- **Step 2:** Search for the desired app.
- **Step 3:** Verify the app details (developer, reviews).
- **Step 4:** Tap "Download" or "Install" and wait for installation to complete.
- **Step 5:** Open the app and follow on-screen instructions to set it up.
- **Step 6:** Explore basic features and adjust settings.

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
- [How to download an app on Iphone (Youtube)](#)
- [How to download an app on Android (Youtube)](#)
- Safe App Downloading Practices (see template)

Self-reflection Questions:
- What was the easiest part of downloading and setting up the app?
- What part do I need more practice with?

Template (if required)

1. **Download from Official App Stores** – Always use the Google Play Store (Android) or Apple App Store (iPhone/iPad) to avoid harmful apps.
2. **Check Reviews and Ratings** – Read user reviews and check ratings to ensure the app is safe and useful.
3. **Verify the Developer** – Ensure the app comes from a trusted developer or company.
4. **Be Wary of Permissions** – Only grant necessary permissions. If an app requests access to personal data or device functions it doesn't need, reconsider downloading it.
5. **Watch Out for In-App Purchases** – Some apps may offer "free" downloads but charge for extra features. Check pricing details beforehand
6. **Update Apps Regularly** – Keep apps updated to ensure security fixes and new features.
7. **Avoid Clicking on Unknown Links** – Be cautious of messages or ads that prompt you to download apps from unofficial sources.

Apps that are useful in your daily life:

1. Communication & Socializing

- **WhatsApp / Signal / Telegram** – Secure messaging and video calls.
- **Zoom** – Video calls for keeping in touch with family.
- **Nextdoor / Nebenan.de (Germany)** – Connecting with local communities.
- **Facebook** – Popular for joining groups and staying connected.

2. Health & Well-being

- **Doctolib (France, Germany, Italy)** – Booking doctor appointments online.
- **Jouw Omgeving (Sweden)** – Mental health support platform.
- **MediSafe** – Medication reminders.
- **MyTherapy (Germany, France, Italy, Sweden)** – Tracking medications and health routines.
- **Headspace / Calm** – Meditation and relaxation exercises.

3. Safety & Emergency Assistance

- **112 App (EU-wide)** – Direct emergency assistance across Europe.
- **bSafe** – Personal safety with location sharing.
- **Life360** – Family location tracking.
- **Red Cross First Aid App (France, Germany, Italy, Sweden)** – First aid guides and emergency contacts.

4. Finance & Daily Transactions

- **Lydia (France)** – Popular mobile payment app.
- **Twint (Germany, Switzerland)** – Cashless payments.

- **Satispay (Italy)** – Contactless mobile payments.
- **Klarna (Sweden, Germany, France, Italy)** – Secure online payments and installment plans.
- **Banking Apps (BNP Paribas, Deutsche Bank, Unicredit, Swedbank, Nordea)** – Checking accounts and transactions.

5. Grocery & Food Delivery
- **Carrefour / Monoprix (France, Italy)** – Online grocery shopping.
- **REWE / Edeka (Germany)** – Grocery home delivery.
- **Coop / ICA (Sweden)** – Grocery ordering and home delivery.
- **Uber Eats / Just Eat / Deliveroo** – Food delivery across Europe.

6. Entertainment & Learning
- **Kindle / Audible** – eBooks and audiobooks.
- **Duolingo / Babbel** – Learning new languages.
- **Spotify / YouTube Music** – Listening to music and podcasts.
- **ARTE (France, Germany, Italy, Sweden)** – European cultural TV programs and documentaries.
- **Netflix / RaiPlay (Italy) / MyTF1 (France) / TV4 Play (Sweden) / ZDF Mediathek (Germany)** – Watching TV and films.

7. Transportation & Navigation
- **Google Maps / Waze** – GPS and public transport guidance.
- **Uber (France, Germany, Sweden, Italy)** – Booking taxis.
- **Bolt (France, Germany, Italy, Sweden)** – Alternative ride-hailing service.
- **Citymapper (France, Germany, Italy)** – Public transport routes.
- **SNCF Connect (France) / Deutsche Bahn (Germany) / Trenitalia (Italy) / SJ (Sweden)** – Train booking and real-time schedules.

8. Memory & Brain Training
- **Lumosity / Elevate** – Brain training games.
- **Peak** – Cognitive exercises.
- **Memorado (Germany, France, Italy, Sweden)** – Memory improvement app.

TOPIC 4: SPORT AND HOBBIES

TOPIC 4: SPORT AND HOBBIES

1. BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ROUTINE

Theme
Sport and Hobbies

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Building a Sustainable Exercise Routine

Competencies Addressed:
Select 1 or 2 competencies from the LifeComp Framework

Title of the Activity:
Designing a Weekly Exercise Routine That Works for You!

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
By completing this activity, older adults will:
- *Discover enjoyable ways to stay active*
- *Create a routine that fits their lifestyle and energy levels*
- *Gain confidence in maintaining healthy habits*
- *Learn how to stay consistent without feeling overwhelmed*

Step-by-step instructions:
1. *Begin by thinking about why staying active matters to you (e.g. more energy, better sleep, staying mobile).*
2. *Jot down two or three activities you already enjoy or are curious to try (e.g. walking, tai chi, stretching, dancing).*
3. *Choose two or three days in the week where you are most likely to have time and energy.*
4. *Match each chosen day with one of your activities. Keep it short and manageable to begin with.*
5. *Set a small reminder to help you stay on track. This might be a note on the fridge, a phone alarm, or a friendly check-in with someone you trust.*
6. *Use the routine tracker (below or on a separate page) to record your movement for the next seven days.*
7. *At the end of the week, look at how it went. Adjust your plan if needed. Try not to aim for perfection—small, steady progress is the goal.*

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Tips for Getting Active Over 65: https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-older-adults/

Simple Seated Exercises (PDF): https://sitless.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Traeningsprogram-for-aeldre_Niveau-1_Folder_A4_UK.pdf

Self-reflection Questions:
1. What surprised you about how your body or mood responded to gentle movement this week?
2. How might you make your new routine even more enjoyable or manageable?

Template (if required)

2. CREATING AND CONNECTING THROUGH YOUR INTERESTS

Theme
Creating and Connecting Through Your Interests

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Sharing Hobbies Creatively on Instagram

Competencies Addressed:
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Title of the Activity:
Documenting and Sharing Your Hobby on Instagram

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
Gain confidence in using Instagram

Learn to showcase hobbies visually and creatively

Connect with communities that share their passions

Enjoy social interaction and online engagement

Step-by-step instructions:
Choose a hobby you enjoy and think about what makes it interesting

Take 3-5 clear photos or short videos showcasing your hobby

Write a caption describing your hobby and what you enjoy about it

Use relevant hashtags (e.g., #Gardening, #CookingFun) to reach others

Post your content on Instagram

Explore and follow other hobby accounts and interact by liking or commenting

Try Instagram Stories or Reels to share quick updates or tips

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials

- How to Use Instagram to Sell your Hobby Products: https://makelocalforglobal.com/how-to-use-instagram-to-sell-your-hobby-products/

- Instagram Help Center: https://help.instagram.com/

Self-reflection Questions:

What did you enjoy most about sharing your hobby on Instagram?

How do you think connecting with others online can enhance your hobby experience?

Template (if required)

3. LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

Theme
Sport and Hobbies

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Learning a New Language

Competencies Addressed:
L1 (Growth Mindset)

Title of the Activity:
First Steps in a New Language

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
Builds confidence in trying something new

Supports mental stimulation and memory

Encourages a playful, lighthearted approach to language

Opens opportunities for cultural curiosity and connection

Step-by-step instructions:
Choose one language that interests you (this could be related to travel, family, culture or simply curiosity)

Learn five basic phrases:
1. *Hello*
2. *How are you?*
3. *My name is…*
4. *Thank you*
5. *Goodbye*

Practise saying each phrase aloud three times. Try writing them down in both English and the new language

If possible, download a free app like Duolingo or use an online video to practise pronunciation

Try using one of your phrases in a real-world setting (e.g. greeting someone, reading a food label, speaking to a neighbour)

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Duolingo (free language app): https://www.duolingo.com

BBC Languages archive: https://www.bbc.co.uk/languages

YouTube: Search for "Learn [language] for beginners" and filter by short videos

Free online learning platform: https://deutsch.info/login

Self-reflection Questions:
Which phrase felt easiest to remember and why?

How did trying a new language make me feel?

Template (if required)

4. PLANNING A GROUP FITNESS CHALLENGE

Theme
Sport and Hobbies

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Planning a Group Fitness Challenge

Competencies Addressed:
S3 (Collaboration)

Title of the Activity:
Design Your Own Group Fitness Challenge

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
Encourages teamwork and shared purpose

Increases enjoyment through group support

Promotes healthier habits through social accountability

Step-by-step instructions:
Gather one or more people who would like to join a movement challenge

Agree on an activity everyone can manage comfortably (e.g. walking, chair exercises, dancing to music)

Choose a timeframe: one week, ten days or more

Set a simple, shared goal (e.g. each person moves for 15 minutes a day)

Decide how to track your progress. This could be a group message, a printed tracker, or verbal check-ins

Celebrate at the end of the challenge, even if the goal wasn't met fully. The effort and support matter most

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
World Health Organisation Walking & Cycling Toolkit: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240109902

Active 10 App (for group walking goals): https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/

Self-reflection Questions:
1. What role do I enjoy most when working in a team - organising, encouraging or simply showing up?
2. How did it feel to plan a challenge that includes others?

Template (if required)

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5. REDISCOVERING JOY THROUGH MOVEMENT

Theme
Sport and Hobbies

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Rediscovering Joy in Movement

Competencies Addressed:
P3 & L1

Title of the Activity:
Creating Your Joy Movement Map

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
Explore movement as a source of emotional and mental well-being
Identify personalised, low-pressure ways to be physically active
Reconnect with positive experiences of movement from the past

Step-by-step instructions:
1. *Sit comfortably with a pen and worksheet (or plain paper)*
2. *Reflect on times in your life when moving felt enjoyable or even freeing. These can be ordinary moments such as humming while tidying or dancing in the kitchen*
3. *Think of current activities that involve natural movement, even unintentionally (e.g. tidying the garden, walking to the corner shop, swaying to music)*
4. *Make a short list of physical activities that appeal to your senses or bring ease*
5. *Use the space provided to create your personal Joy Movement Map—a list, a sketch, or a diagram*
6. *Choose one small action from your map and try it out during the coming week*
7. *Reflect afterwards on how that movement felt and whether you'd like to build on it*

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Free fun fitness youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/@growwithjo

Self-reflection Questions:
Which movement made me feel lighter or more at ease this week?
Is there a particular time of day or setting that makes movement feel more enjoyable for me?

6. TRYING A NEW HOBBY WITHOUT FEAR

Theme
Sport and Hobbies

Estimated Duration (mins):
60 min

Topic
Trying a New Hobby Without Fear

Competencies Addressed:
L1 (Growth Mindset)

Title of the Activity:
Try a New Hobby

Benefit of this activity for older adults:
Builds confidence through gentle exploration
Supports mental stimulation and personal creativity
Reduces fear of failure in a safe and relaxed way

Step-by-step instructions:
1. *Think of one hobby or activity you've always wanted to try*
2. *Write down one small way you could explore it this week (e.g. watch a tutorial, ask a friend to accompany you , buy a supply, try a taster session)*
3. *Set aside 10–15 minutes on a day that suits you*
4. *During that time, allow yourself to explore without judgment*
5. *Reflect afterwards on how it felt and whether you'd like to continue*

Link to Additional Resources or Reading Materials:
Skillshare Free Classes (variety of hobbies): https://www.skillshare.com/en/browse/free-classes
YouTube: "Beginners Try…" videos for hobby inspiration
Free creative challenges: https://www.creativebug.com

Self-reflection Questions:
What did I enjoy most during my first attempt?
How can I be kinder to myself as I continue exploring this hobby?

Template (if required)

Social Circles