

# Friends & Family Dialogue Guide

PROMPTING DISCUSSION ABOUT AGE AND AGEISM



Whether you gather virtually, or in-person at a physical distance, time with friends and family during the holiday season offers a unique opportunity to consider how to disrupt ageism in daily life. Make it fun, add in delicious food, and share some meaningful dialogue!

## What is dialogue?

Unlike debate, dialogue requires that participants listen for meaning by suspending personal opinions. The dialogue process invites participants to grow in understanding and perhaps decide to act together with common goals.

## Setting the Stage for Meaningful Conversation

Following are possible ground rules for your discussion.

- Be here now—set phones and distractions aside.
- Listen and ask questions—take a curious stance, speak from your own experience, and ask each other questions.
- Participate to the fullest of your ability—if you hear your voice a lot, pause and listen. If you haven't heard your voice, speak up. Listening well is participation, but community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.

## Discussion Questions

Following are possible questions designed to raise consciousness and spur action.

- When do you recall first noticing age differences?
- What messages about different ages and stages do you recall receiving as a child? In books? In media? In our family? Among friends?
- What beliefs about age/aging do you continue carry with you? How do you think those beliefs have shaped your experience of getting older?
- Where do you notice ageism in your life? Our community?
- What can we do to disrupt ageism when it shows up in our lives?
- If we embraced age-inclusivity what kinds of things would we see in our family/community? Hear? Feel?
- What are some of the helping/hindering forces?
- What have you seen that gives you hope?
- What are you willing to do personally to create change?

## Resources

[LeadingAge Ageism Resources](#)

[This Chair Rocks Consciousness Raising Toolkit](#)

[HelpAge International Tackling Ageism through Consciousness Raising](#)

*“Dialogue...is a conversation with a center, not sides.”*

—William Isaacs, *Dialogue: The Art of Thinking Together*