

Live Your Life Well

Facilitator's Toolkit for Organizing the Day

Features of the Event:

- You will recruit ten people to host small group discussions on 1 topic for 4 people, or recruit five people to lead small group discussions on 2 topics for 8 people.
- The small groups of 4 or 8 people stay together and rotate among the speakers' tables for 10 discussions on 10 topics.
- Schedule the event in a room that holds 40 people, at 10 or 5 tables, with room to serve lunch.
- A poster template is part of this kit, to help you develop your own posters.
- Outline for the Event:
 - Start at 10 AM with introductions and overview
 - Give participants Notes page and survey form
 - Ask participants to write down current strategies they purposefully employ.
 - Break up into small groups.
 - Each topic discussion will last about 20 minutes. 5 topics should take 100 minutes –
 - Break for lunch
 - Then finish with the final 5 topics
 - Take 10 minutes at the very end for participants to finish the questionnaire and survey. Please do not skip this step!

Additional Notes:

- Each discussion group leader will solicit ideas from the group on how to achieve the select strategy, and also be ready to prime the pump with some ideas, or round out the ideas shared with what they know about the topic.
- Before the groups move onto the next table, give the participants time to write down onto the Notes page all the new strategies they liked and think they may try, of all those they heard during the discussion.
- At the very end of the day, the COA leader will ask every participant to review their Notes on all the strategies they learned during the day and then select the key strategies they think they will definitely add into their daily practices and write those onto page 1 of the participant questionnaire. Also, ask all participants to complete page 2 of the questionnaire.

Instructions for Group Leaders -- Organizing the Live Your Life Well Small Group Discussions

- You are a discussion group leader; you will be assigned to lead a table with a small group of adults, between 4-8 people. (10 groups of 4 or 5 groups of 8)
- You will lead either 1 or 2 topical discussions about a specific “tool” / strategy for building more resilience and better mental health. (If the site has recruited 10 group leaders, you will handle one topic. If the site recruits 5 group leaders, you will get to lead 2 discussion groups.)
- All participants will move around the tables to meet with each speaker, either one or two times.
- **In addition to your own insights into the topic, please familiarize yourself with the Mental Health of America site at <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/stay-positive> site and use the hyperlinks in the list of 10 topics, below, to build a list of strategies under each goal area.**
- On the day of the event at the Council on Aging, you will facilitate the discussions, which will last for about 20 minutes per topic. Ask the members of the group to share their personal strategies and be mindful to weave the additional strategies you have or gathered from the website into the conversation.
- At the end of each discussion period, give the group members time to privately identify 1 or 2 strategies they will try during the next 8 weeks; they will have a sheet with space to capture their private notes.

The Ten Tools

These 10 proven strategies or “tools” can help adults feel stronger and more hopeful. Check out the links for each topic for specific, easy-to-follow tips. **(Use hyperlinks for each topic below)**

1. Connect with others
2. Stay positive
3. Get physically active
4. Help others

5. Get enough sleep
6. Create joy and satisfaction
7. Eat well
8. Take care of your spirit
9. Deal better with hard times
10. Get professional help if you need it

Source: The Mental Health of America site at <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/stay-positive>

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For the Host Agency Leader

Participant Outcome Evaluation Method

At the beginning of the day, while everyone is gathered:

1. Introduce all the discussion group leaders and all the participants.
2. Briefly introduce the 10 Tools for improving one's mental health and well-being.
3. Form groups of 4 or 8 people, depending upon the number of discussion group leaders you've lined up.
4. Before moving into separate groups, give the participants 5-10 minutes to write down the strategies they conscientiously use now for maintaining maximal well-being. They should write down their current strategies on page 1 of the Program Participant Questionnaire and Survey (2 pages) provided.
5. Then, move into groups. Give the groups 20 minutes per topic. Be a strict time keeper!
6. Enjoy lunch in the middle of the event.
7. Close with the final 5 discussion groups.
8. Before adjourning, give the participants at least 10 minutes to write down the new strategies they feel they will definitely try, as a result of what they learned today. Also, ask all participants to complete Page 2 of the Participant Questionnaire and Survey so we can gain program feedback too.
9. Also encourage the speakers to complete page 2 of the Program Survey.
10. Collect the Program Participant Questionnaire and Survey from everyone.
11. Mail a copy of the surveys to MCOA, Attn: Shari Cox, at 116 Pleasant Street, Suite 306, Easthampton, MA 01027.

If you have any questions about these instructions, please contact Mary Kay Browne, Director of Special Programs, at marykay@mcoaonline.com.

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Program Participant Notes

New Strategies I May Consider Trying...

Program Participant Questionnaire and Survey

Site:

Date:

<p>My Current Strategies These are the ways I maintain my ability to feel hopeful and strong in the face of life's ups and downs.</p>	<p>New Strategies Following today, I will try to add the following practices into my life. These new strategies will help make me feel (even) stronger and more hopeful.</p>

Why did you attend today?

Please tell us how many new strategies will you try to add into your daily routine, as a result of today's what you've learned today?

How would you rate your overall experience with the Live Your Life Well Program today?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

What could be done to make the program experience better?

Would you recommend this program to others, if it were offered again?

- Yes
- No If not, why? _____

Name (Optional): _____

Live Your Life Well

Come to the *Live Your Life Well Day* at the Council on Aging and learn how to become stronger and more resilient.

The event will be at the _____ on _____, from _____ AM to _____ PM.

- Enjoy a delicious lunch!
- Meet new and interesting people!
- Share your personal insights and learn new strategies from others!

Funding for the event is provided by the MA Association of Councils on Aging through a grant provided by the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

10 Tools for Resilience

1. Maintain good relationships with close family members, friends and others;
2. Avoid seeing crises or stressful events as unbearable problems;
3. Accept circumstances that cannot be changed;
4. Develop realistic goals and move towards them;
5. Take decisive actions in adverse situations;
6. Look for opportunities of self-discovery after a struggle with loss;
7. Develop self-confidence;
8. Keep a long-term perspective and consider the stressful event in a broader context;
9. Maintain a hopeful outlook, expecting good things and visualizing what is wished;
10. Take care of one's mind and body, exercising regularly, paying attention to one's own needs and feelings.