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ENJOYING MY GOLDEN YEARS:

Living out a sense of who I am

by

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1999



ENJOYING MY GOLDEN YEARS:

Living out a sense of who I am

Meaningful ways to use my

Time

Energies

Personality

Talents

Interests

By myself and with others.

LESSON GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Lesson Goal: Maximizing my golden years.

Lesson Objectives:

To discover who I am.

To discover who I would like to be.

To identify my needs.

To begin a plan for my golden-years lifestyle:

Activities.

People.

Roles.

INTRODUCTION

The term “golden years” carries the promise we will experience richness as a capstone to our lives. But when we get there, do we really discover these golden years to be the “best” years of our lives? This lesson helps you address how you can help make these important years enjoyable.. By looking at who you are and your own set of needs, you can begin to plan how you want to live through your golden years. Here is the lesson’s outline:

- I. RETIRING—the freedom of choosing how to live in the Golden Years.
 - A. Transition in life—change / stress / choices
 - B. Identity—old / evolving / new
- II. PLANNING—the opportunity of re-creation through the discovery and unfolding of yourself.
 - A. Needs—levels / satisfaction / indicators / priorities /
 - B. Activities—needs / interests / talents / heal-th and dis-ease
 - C. People—family / friends / support / networks
 - D. Roles—drop / add / expand

Show Outline.

I. RETIRING/CHOOSING HOW TO LIVE YOUR GOLDEN YEARS

First, let’s talk about what happens when we decide to live this part of our life.

A. TRANSITION

Entering into our golden years, whether through retirement or otherwise, does not occur in a single day. We usually plan such a transition for years, both financially and psychologically. Any change we make, whether large or small, brings stress to our lives. Consequently, entering into the golden years often includes a few grains of sand along with gold.

Although most retirees are satisfied with retirement, they generally report that both positive and negative experiences are associated with these years. What are, in your mind, some of the pluses and minuses about your transition into these years?

Affirm answers about pluses & minuses

Here is a common list of how others view retirement. Apply this to your entry of the golden years, wherever you can.

On the sheet labeled, “LISTS OF RESPONSES TO RETIREMENT,” are some common lists about this transition that include both pleasant and challenging moments.

Show the sheet on “LISTS OF RESPONSES TO RETIREMENT.”

Merely call attention to 2 or 3 under each **bold** heading, then move on.

Retirement involves major life changes, and like any other change in life, it causes stress. It is common to experience short-term stress during the transition period that occurs immediately following retirement. Usually, it takes about a year to adapt to this new life, to work out differences in expectations, and to readjust how we interact with our environment and those around us. What changes do you think might be stressful in retirement? What could be done to minimize stress? Do ACTIVITY #1.

B. IDENTITY OR ROLE

One primary change involves our identity of who we are. Others begin to see us and we begin to see ourselves differently. Do ACTIVITY # 2, by referring to your interests, skills, training, relationships, family, goals, hobbies, etc.

Try to identify old roles or identities, new roles, and evolving roles—we may not know exactly what our evolving roles will look like. It may help to think of these roles or identities in terms of your functions in various relationships. Do ACTIVITY # 3.

While these adjustments are often more difficult in anticipation than in actuality, good planning can help us move smoothly throughout our retirement years. Planning involves identifying your needs and wants, then developing ways to achieve them.

II.

PLANNING

Planning involves taking charge of your time and priorities, in light of your needs and interests.

A. NEEDS

(Much of this exercise adapted from Kay Endres, LCSW.)

Brainstorm what the perfect retirement looks like for you, personally.

We make major changes in life and big decisions based on our needs.

Needs are different from preferences. I am going to show to you a structure of human needs. Just let your mind associate with anything you see here, and note two things:

- 1) Jot down any ideas you have that relate to yourself and your needs as I show you this. Consider various contexts both in and outside the home.
- 2) Define each area in your own terms.

Here is an abridged version of Maslow's Pyramid of Needs. The renowned psychologist, Abraham Maslow (1905–1970), assumed everyone has a drive to reach their potential. This drive works from the bottom to the top of the pyramid. We only focus on an upper level when the levels below it are met.

Change = stress.

It takes about 1 year to work through the change.

Do ACTIVITY # 1. Perhaps do this as a group.

Do ACTIVITY # 2. Perhaps do this as a group.

Do ACTIVITY # 3. Perhaps do this collectively.

Wait for their response, and acknowledge what they say.

Show Maslow. Use his theory to stimulate ideas about needs. Don't get sidetracked into details.

Biological—food, hunger—this pertains to our internal physical well being. When biological needs are SATISFIED, only then we move up to the next level. Likewise, if we are focusing on the esteem level while a love-level need returns, we will leave the esteem level to focus again on the love. The word “SATISFIED” is a key word. When we are satisfied at the biological level, we are COMFORTABLE. So, ask yourself, “What makes me comfortable? What does it take to satisfy me, so that I am comfortable?”

Be sure to ask the personal question in each level.

We each have different SATISFACTION levels. If we are thirsty, some may need just a sip of water, while others may need a whole jug of it. Similarly, we each have different thresholds of pain, so that, if we had a pain in our shoulder joint, some of us may comfortable to go bowling with that pain, while others of us may feel too uncomfortable with the pain to go bowling.

Safety, the next level—this pertains to our external physical environment. When we are satisfied here, our environment is PREDICTABLE. Again, we all have different levels of need here. The question is, “What do I need to know is predictably place in my environment, so that I feel I am safe?” Examples might be that the spouse always locks the doors at night, the fire alarm is functional, or police monitor the neighborhood.

(Personal question)

Belonging—is a very strong need. In fact, major theories of motivation and basic approaches of parenting are built around this human need to belong. But again, we each have different levels or degrees to which we need to belong. We are satisfied at this level when we feel WELCOME. So, ask yourself, “What is necessary in order to feel welcome?” Belonging could include belonging to a quilting club or being accepted by friends.

(Personal question)

Esteem—is a strong need that is with us throughout life. RESPECT and CONSISTENCY are key words for this esteem level, because we often feel respect for ourselves when others consistently respect us. So, we generally feel satisfied in terms of our sense of self-esteem, when we feel respected. Ask yourself, then, “What is required in order for me to feel consistently respected?” Examples could include being respected in a group for your expertise or taking a class and doing well in it.

(Personal question)

Actualization—is the ultimate level, where we have MEANINGFUL ACHIEVEMENT. At this level, we ACHIEVE in a way that makes us feel we are using our potential in a MEANINGFUL manner. The question, then, is, “What do I need to achieve that will make me feel I have reached my potential in a meaningful or fulfilling way?” Feeling fulfilled about putting together a lesson like this could be actualizing for some people.

(Personal question)

Maslow also includes our need for cognition (understanding, novelty, curiosity) and esthetics (order or beauty). Notice that satisfying needs more than filling deficits. Be sure to include positive needs about actualizing, thinking, beauty, your interests, etc.

Do ACTIVITY # 4, now.

Now, add what you have written in your notes to this list of needs. After looking over the whole list, mark the 2 or 3 that are most important to you.

Do ACTIVITY # 4.

Now look at **ACTIVITY #5**. Choose the need that is most important to you and jot down 5 indicators (it is fine if you can't do 5, but try for 5). An **INDICATOR** is something that specifically has to happen in order for you to say, "Yes, this need in my life is met." It can be something that is already occurring or something that has to yet occur, in order for your particular need to be satisfied. Examples of indicators for the need of belonging, as expressed in terms of a particular group, might be being a contributing member of the group, being able to reciprocate ideas with those in the group, or being included in the activities of the group. You can later do this for other important needs

On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being low, 10 being high), rate how important it is for each indicator to belong in your life. Write your rating in the column to the immediate right of each indicator.

Next, average these indicators. (You average them by adding them up and dividing by the number of indicators you have.) Later, if you do this with other needs, do the same thing. Average the ratings of all the indicators for each need that you consider. You determine best how to fulfill your wants and needs.

B. ACTIVITIES

Now, on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being low, 10 being high), rate how often each indicator occurs in your life right now in reference to your activities. Only you can choose which activities best meet your needs.

C. PEOPLE

Rate, on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being low, 10 being high), how often each indicator occurs in your life right now in reference to people who are in your life. How you use your golden years affects your spouse and others close to you. Of course, they affect your life, too.

D. ROLES

Roles involve both our activities and the people we relate with. Roles pertain to our anticipated activities as we relate with certain people. For example, based on our past interactions, there is a set of behaviors that are expected of us as a spouse, parent, student, shopper, etc. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being low, 10 being high), rate how often each indicator occurs in your life right now in reference to your roles.

Average each of these.

If there is a difference between the importance of a need and the occurrence of that need being met in terms of activities, people, or roles, then you may want to make some adjustments in your life. What adjustments do you want to make? These adjustments will help you improve the quality of your Golden Years. Based on your goals to meet your needs, then, you can come up with a plan to improve your golden-years lifestyle.

Please take a moment to fill out the evaluation. This helps us improve the quality of lessons

Do ACTIVITY # 5.

DO INDICATORS.

Try for 5 indicators.

Rate each indicator.

Average indicators; dividing the sum of indicators by the number of the indicators (in case you did not have 5 of them).

Rate indicators as they apply to your personal activities.

Rate indicators as they apply to the important people in your life.

Rate indicators as they apply to your various roles.

Do Evaluation.

ENJOYING YOUR GOLDEN YEARS

I. RETIRING—

Choosing how to live your Golden Years.

A. Transition in life

& stress

B. Identity

II. PLANNING—

**Re-creation thru discovery
& unfolding of yourself.**

A. Needs

B. Activities

C. People

D. Roles

LISTS OF RESPONSES TO RETIREMENT (apply to your situation, if other than retirement)

Best things reported about retirement:

- being creative (spouse says it's being "bad")
- no daily routine / not stagnating
- being your own boss
- little responsibility & few obligations (except to self and family)
- a more relaxed atmosphere

Worst things reported about retirement:

- Miss the work and friends at work
- Spouse worried about the money
- Spouse criticizes activities
- Getting spouse to do things you want
- Making up mind what to do tomorrow

Studies of retirees report:

- The most important item is retirees' ability to vary how they spend time.
- Retirees are happier with their use of time than working persons.
- Retirees spend more time with their spouses than working persons, & time spent with the spouse is positively associated with marital quality.
- Retirees make more new friends than working persons.
- Retirees have richer social worlds than working persons.

What women say about their husband's recent retirement:

- It is hard when women don't work, then suddenly have this man sitting around all day. (Yet retired men especially enjoy time with their spouses.)
- Many move to a smaller house, then they get on each other's nerves.
- Lack of space—"I need my own space and he needs his."
- It is important to allow each other "free space."
(Women focus on space, men on time.)
- Have days when he leaves the house to do . . . whatever.
- Before my husband retired, I had the radio on while I worked around the house. He doesn't like the radio playing, so now I have a tiny radio in my pocket and wear earphones. It works great. (Incidentally, who controls the TV remote?)
- Over 50% of wives of retirees are initially somewhat sorry husband retired.

Possible obstacles (which sometimes reduce marital satisfaction) include:

- companionship that is threatened, making joint endeavors difficult.
- conflict regarding use of time.
- conflict regarding use of space—especially when the wife feels the husband infringes on her domain.
- conflict over household chores when 1 party feels overwhelmed, nagged, or the division of labor regarding household chores seems unfair. Unfairness is big if:
 - 1) the couple does not spend time together.
 - 2) there is role incongruity in gender roles, especially if the wife continues to work after the husband retires, there is a belief in the traditional role of husband as main provider, or the wife's schedule is too hectic for the husband (there is less argument if the wife has less than 3 activities).

ACTIVITY # 1

What changes do you think might be stressful in retirement?
What could be done to minimize the stress?

CHANGES

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

ACTIVITY # 2

One primary change involves our identity of who we are. Others begin to see us and we begin to see ourselves differently. Fill in the following (refer to your interests, skills, training, relationships, family, goals, hobbies, etc.):

WHO I AM

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

WHO I WOULD LIKE TO BE

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

ACTIVITY # 3

Try to identify old roles or identities, new roles, and evolving roles—we may not know exactly what our evolving roles will look like. It may help to think of these roles or identities in terms of roles and functions.

OLD ROLES

- 1
- 2
- 3

NEW ROLES

- 1
- 2
- 3

EVOLVING ROLES

- 1
- 2
- 3

Actualize
ACHIEVE

Esteem
RESPECT

Belonging
WELCOME

Safety
PREDICTABLE

Biological
COMFORT

ACTIVITY # 4

NEEDS:

Listening	Attentive
Admired	Meaningful Goals
Honesty	Comfort
Freedom from Fear	Physical Activity
Trust	Share Life
Communicate Love	Acceptance
Esteem	Sexual Expression
Respect	Validation
Safety	Fun
Risk taking	Serenity
Achievement	Recognition
Time	Predictability
Challenge	Affirmation
Investment of Emotion	Interest
Spirituality	Curiosity
Belong	Understanding
Beauty	Welcome
Fulfillment	Order
Security	Peace

ACTIVITY # 5

NEED:

OCCURENCE
INDICATOR

RATING

A P R

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

	OCCURENCE INDICATOR	RATING	A P R
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

NEED:

OCCURENCE
INDICATOR

RATING

A P R

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

	OCCURENCE INDICATOR	RATING	A P R
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

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OCCURENCE
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RATING

A P R

- 1
- 2
- 3
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	OCCURENCE INDICATOR	RATING	A P R
1			
2			
3			
4			

EVALUATION

Thank you for participating in the *ENJOYING MY GOLDEN YEARS: living out a sense of who I am*. To ensure the effectiveness of quality for future programs, please take a moment to complete the following questions.

- | | <u>Poor</u> | | | | <u>Excellent</u> | |
|---|-------------|---|---|---|------------------|----|
| 1. Was the presentation easy to understand? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 2. Was the information appropriate and helpful? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

3. Was there adequate time to discuss the material?

4. What part of the seminar was most helpful to you personally? Why?

5. How could this lesson be improved?

6. Any other comments?
(Use back of form, if necessary).

THANK YOU!

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INTRODUCTION

Do we actually discover these golden years to be the "best" years of our lives? This lesson helps you address your lifestyle in these important years. By looking at who you are and your own set of needs, you can begin to plan how you want to live through your golden years.

The following is an outline we will follow in this lesson.

- I. RETIRING—the freedom of choosing how to live in the Golden Years.
 - A. Transition in life—change / stress / choices
 - B. Identity—old / evolving / new
- II. PLANNING—the opportunity of re-creation through the discovery and unfolding of yourself.
 - A. Needs—levels / satisfaction / indicators / priorities /
 - B. Activities—needs / interests / talents / health and disease
 - C. People—family / friends / support / networks
 - D. Roles—drop / add / expand

I. RETIRING/CHOOSING HOW TO LIVE YOUR GOLDEN YEARS

A. TRANSITION

Entering into our golden years, whether through retirement or otherwise, does not occur in a single day. We usually plan such a transition for years, both financially and psychologically.

Any change we make, whether large or small, brings stress to our lives.

On the sheet labeled, "LISTS OF RESPONSES TO RETIREMENT," are some common lists about this transition that include both pleasant and challenging moments.

What changes do you think might be stressful in retirement?

What could be done to minimize stress? (List under "CHANGES" & "WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS" in ACTIVITY # 1.

B. IDENTITY OR ROLE

Others begin to see us and we begin to see ourselves differently. Fill in ACTIVITY # 2. (refer to your interests, skills, training, relationships, family, goals, hobbies, etc).

Try to identify old roles or identities, new roles, and evolving roles—Fill in ACTIVITY # 3 (it may help to think of these roles or identities in terms of your functions in various relationships).

II.

PLANNING

A. NEEDS

Brainstorm what the perfect retirement looks like for you, personally.

We make major changes in life and big decisions based on our needs.

See the abridged version of Maslow's Pyramid of Needs. In each of these we move to a new level when we are SATISFIED. ("Needs" Activities adapted from Kay Endres)

Biological—"What makes me comfortable? What does it take to satisfy me, so that I am comfortable?"

We each have different SAISFACTION levels.

Safety, the next level—"What do I need to know is predictably place in my environment, so that I feel I am safe?"

Belonging—"What is necessary in order to feel welcome?"

Esteem—"What is required in order for me to feel consistently respected?"

Actualization—"What do I need to achieve that will make me feel I have reached my potential in a meaningful or fulfilling way?"

Maslow also includes our need for cognition (understanding, novelty, curiosity) and esthetics (order or beauty).

Now, add to this list other words for needs that you have.

After looking over the whole list, mark the 2 or 3 that are most important to you.

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(apply to your situation, if other than retirement)

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ACTIVITY # 1

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2

3

4

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1

2

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2

3

NEW ROLES

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2

3

EVOLVING ROLES

1

2

3

Actualize
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Belonging
WELCOME

Safety
PREDICTABLE

Biological
COMFORT

ACTIVITY # 4

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Listening	Attentive
Admired	Meaningful Goals
Honesty	Comfort
Freedom from Fear	Physical Activity
Trust	Share Life
Communicate Love	Acceptance
Esteem	Sexual Expression
Respect	Validation
Safety	Fun
Risk taking	Serenity
Achievement	Recognition
Time	Predictability
Challenge	Affirmation
Investment of Emotion	Interest
Spirituality	Curiosity
Belong	Understanding
Beauty	Welcome
Fulfillment	Order
Security	Peace

ACTIVITY # 5

NEED:

OCCURENCE
INDICATOR

RATING

A P R

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

NEED:

OCCURENCE
INDICATOR

RATING

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THANK YOU!