

Movement and Perceptions of Aging

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Group 2

Project Objectives

The questions we were interested in exploring were:

- How can we normalize aging across a multi-generational spectrum?
- How can we spark joy among older adults?
- How can we educate each other on the aging process?



We know that aging happens to everyone and everyone's experiences are valid - what can we do to highlight and learn from these experiences?

The Workshop Design

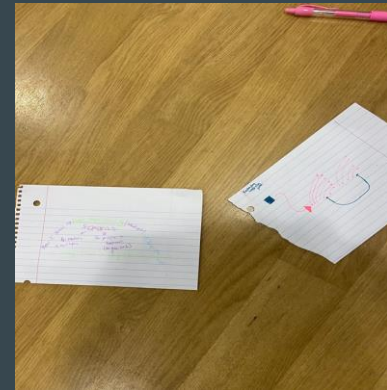
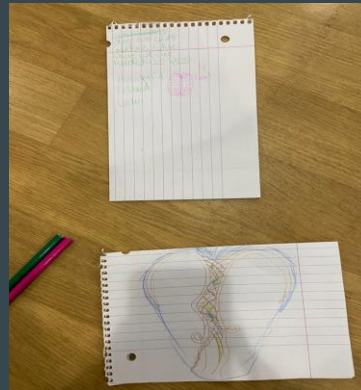
- Original design was for an interview, followed by an active listening activity, then a drawing activity, then open discussion- exactly what we did in class
- However, different groups had slightly different versions depending on the type of group
- Different groups had different insecurities/comprehension issues
 - MGC group not comfortable with movement
 - Indian group had trouble with understanding effect of moods

In-Class Group

- “Test run”
- Group was most multi-generational, but still primarily consisted of college-aged adults
- Saw that most drawings were quite abstract, with movement being more specific to individual mood at the moment

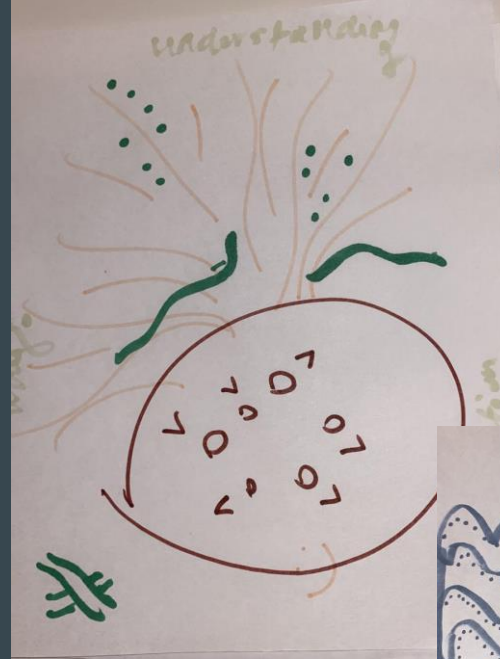
Somatics 1 Class

- Taught one of Mary's somatics classes - most were young adults and were mostly dancers or had a creative background
- Focused on the movement portion of the workshop material
- Most open to work with the different mediums & abstract with their movement
- Duets seemed to indicate common ground between them



Multi-Generational Center

- We hosted a workshop at the multi-generational center in Tempe.
- Participants were from a group of people that regularly attend a group fitness class there.
- Participants knew each other prior to the workshop but not on a personal level.
- Some participants were more willing to share rather than others
- Had a drawing activity where we expressed our thoughts and feelings through art and then explained our art.



enjoying the people that we
are around
wanting to spend more time
with family; intentionally
thankful for health &
education opportunities

Pre-Workshop Interview Questions

1. How does the space you live in affect how you feel?
2. What do you look forward to in the future? (Goals, where do you see yourself...)
3. What are some important events in your life that helped shape you?
4. What brings you the most joy in your life?
5. What is something you wish you knew as a younger person?
6. If there is one thing that you would change in your lifetime, what is it?
7. How has your relationship to your body changed with time?

American Interviewee 1

Gender: Female

Age: 58

1. I feel very affected by the space that I live in. I need open rooms and plenty of light and minimal clutter. With those things I feel better and happier. I made sure to find a house that provides those things to me
2. I want to stay active both physically and mentally. I love to be busy yet have some peaceful time to read . My main goals are to travel, be with my children wherever they live, continue to play tennis and perfect my Italian language skills. I also have found some part time work opportunities and volunteer opportunities that I can do remotely and that helps to round out my life.
3. I think my main experience that helped shape me was my study abroad time in Florence, Italy. It was the most challenging and amazing experience. Not only because I am Italian American but the fact that I went without knowing anyone, learned a new language, made friends with Italians there and explored different cities and countries. It gave me confidence as a young adult to know that I could travel alone, meet people, handle new experiences.
4. My children bring me the most joy in my life. This is a huge accomplishment to raise 4 young adults and watch them grow and take on the world. I invested my adult life in this job and it's very rewarding to watch them evolve. I also love to travel and see my best friends and family so every trip makes me happy. And also sunshine brings me great joy and feeds my soul
5. I wish that I had learned more about networking and having a mentor so that I could have found a rewarding job before raising children. I gained more confidence in myself and my skill set as I got older; I wish I would have had more guidance in pursuing a career
6. I would have opened my own retail clothing store. It was always a dream.
7. I have worked hard to keep my body toned and in good shape. It has been hard to watch the changes but as long as I am taking care of myself, eating right and doing my exercise then I can accept the changes. At this age I feel great, I work out hard, and do my best to look good. I feel like I look younger than I am so that makes it easier to accept the changes of aging.

American Interviewee 2

Gender: Female

Age: 55

1. When my space is cluttered or messy, I feel frustrated and out of control.
2. In the future I see myself as retired and traveling with my husband/ family and friends. My goal would be to have my own hobbies that I'm active in. And to be a grandmother helping my girls raise their children.
3. The important events in my life that shaped me were growing up in a small town in a neighborhood full of kids my age. My parents got divorced. Going to graduate school and supporting myself. Living in NYC and starting a family there. Raising children and becoming an empty nester!
4. Spending quality time with daughters brings me the most joy in my life.
5. When I was younger, I wish I knew that my family would always come first over my job. I could have spent more time focused on family vs job advancement
6. I would have had more children
7. My relationship with my body has not changed dramatically - I'm just more focused on ensuring I stay strong through regular exercise. I didn't worry about staying strong (muscles and heart) when I was younger.

American Interviewee 3

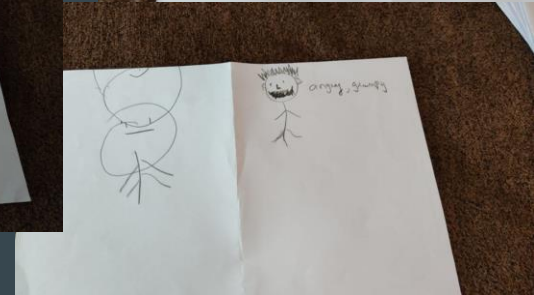
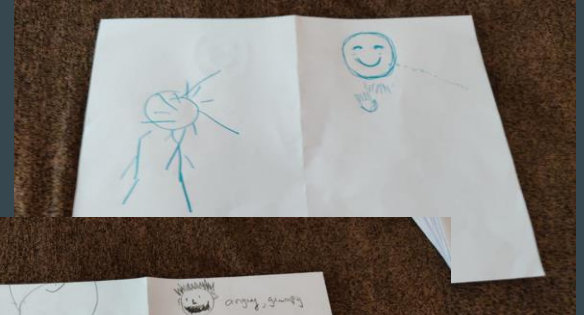
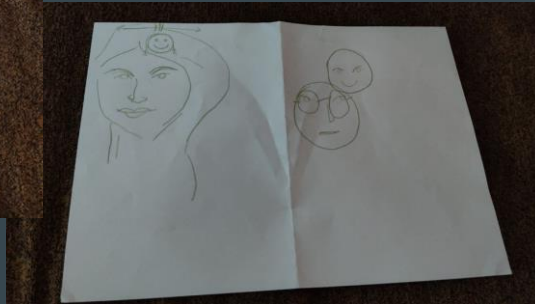
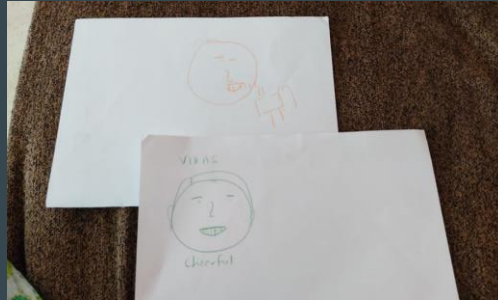
Gender: Female

Age: 80

1. The space you live in has a lot to do with how you deal with life. I always liked each house I lived in and the neighborhood, so I was always happy and my family enjoyed their homes. Now that I am older and in a house that is small with not much room, I miss what I had so I am not as happy.
2. I look forward to spending time with my family and traveling with them. At my age my goals are trying to stay healthy and enjoy seeing my grandchildren grow and what they accomplish in life.
3. Wow a few things. Getting married and raising my children was the most significant event in my life. Moving from my hometown to my husband's hometown was the biggest change.
4. So easy, My family! My children and many grandchildren
5. That you control your life and if you look for the good in people and don't let anyone bring you down you will be happier
6. I didn't like being an only child, and my mom was a single parent so I didn't have a dad.
7. I never had a problem with my body and I was chubby all my life. This body is mine and I'm happy with it. There's too much emphasis with body image. My friends never complained about their bodies. I'm thin now because I don't cook as much.

India Group

- Members of a residential community in Bangalore, India
- Community-based environment - felt very informal due to close familiarity
- Gestural responses were about post-retirement or struggles as a couple (physical, emotional, etc.)



Videos From India Group



Overall Results

- Everyone has a different mindset on aging, whether it's positive or negative but talking about aging in a positive light from youth onwards will be helpful in eradicating the negative perspective
- Very interesting cultural differences between the American and Indian participants, and yet many similarities
 - Familiarity of community/partners
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Collectivistic/Individualistic views
- Differences between younger and older participants - how does the ability for abstract thinking change with time and how does it affect our perception of art as we age?

Further Research

- How can we examine cultural differences with movement and their effects on aging?
- How can we make older adults more comfortable with movement?
- Would having older adults partner with younger people have different effects on their attitudes about aging?
- Putting research into performance

