

ona.fleischer@ageoptions.org 17 Oct 2023

the **DEMENTIA GURU**



**AGE-INCULSIVE
LANGUAGE CHECKLIST**

A FREE CHECKLIST



Meet Ashley

social worker + gerontologist

I'm here to teach you how to use your voice when navigating aging & dementia care.

my story

Hi Fam, I'm Ashley, the founder of "The Dementia Guru" platform!

You might be asking, "How did DEMENTIA become her life?!" At the tender age of 6 years old, I was introduced to Alzheimer's disease as I watched it take a toll on my Great Grandma Trollie & my entire family.

Decades later, I have found myself organically in the midst of the aging + dementia world collaborating & supporting family caregivers & businesses.

I am committed to disrupting ageism & supporting diverse aging communities. I am also committed to helping businesses like YOU dismantle ageist systems of oppression.

About the Checklist

Language matters. Especially when our language can perpetuate AGEIST stereotypes and biases, that can lead to discrimination.

! This is known as ageism: The act of negatively thinking, feeling, and discriminating against people because of their age.

Our thoughts, beliefs, and words can impact the way we treat individuals. Being mindful and intentional with our language can create a more inclusive and welcoming space for all. Language carries meaning!

This checklist is one step towards recognizing the meaning behind your words. As a professional, business, or community member, you can learn to recognize ageist language and disrupt it.

Use this checklist to challenge your thinking, develop insight, and begin using your voice to advocate with aging individuals across the life span.

And if you have additional questions and you're ready to dig deeper, reach out to me anytime!
info@thedementiaguru.com

Disclaimer

This opt-in contains general information that is solely intended for the purpose of giving general information to community members, businesses, and caregivers.

This opt-in contains information that is to be used as general learning purposes about aging and ageism, and it is not to be considered or used as as medical, legal, or therapeutic recommendations and/or advice.

Words

- Consider replacing the following words when referring to older individuals:



- Elderly
- Demented
- Senior
- Alzheimer's patient
- Cutie/Sweetheart
- Feeders/Wanderers



- Older Adult - Older than
- Person experiencing cognitive change
- An individual
- A person
- The person's preferred name
- A person seeking support

- Completely remove these words from your vocabulary:

- Silver Tsunami
- Cougar
- Geezer
- Senile
- GILF

Aging is living, and a born right of all individuals. When referring to specific ages in our language, media, literature, specification may also help to remove bias. The term "older" is a more neutral word and can help to remove bias.

Phrases

Phrases like the following, perpetuate negative beliefs about people living with dementia and aging individuals:

- ⊘ The living dead
- ⊘ A person suffering from Alzheimer's disease
- ⊘ Alzheimer's victim
- ⊘ Anti-Aging
- ⊘ Over the hill
- ⊘ You look good for your age
- ⊘ 60 is the new 50
- ⊘ You're aging like fine wine
- ⊘ Aging backwards
- ⊘ Aging gracefully
- ⊘ Age is just a number
- ⊘ When are you going to _____ (insert milestone expectation, based on age)
- ⊘ Okay boomer

Sometimes, phrases like these may even be made in light or with good intention, but that does not mean that that they are not harmful to the receiver. Reconsider how even the best intention with our words or phrases, can reinforce ageism.

Conversations

During conversations, we have the opportunity to enlighten and change attitudes. Pay attention when:

- Someone is speaking for OR over the individual (especially in medical settings)
- Someone is using terminology like “WE” instead of “YOU”
- Someone is saying they have to help or save all older individuals
- Someone making a joke about aging individuals
- Someone is pitting age categories/generations against each other

These phrases can be demeaning, infantilizing, and a clear indicator of AGEISM. When witnessing this in conversation, you might try saying:



- Did you know this is an ageist phrase?
- Did you know that ageism can be harmful to all aging people, including yourself?
- Instead of using this type of language, you could try this....
- Maybe we can replace this harmful phrase with this.....

Takeaway

Of course, there is no such thing as checking all the boxes, when it comes to disrupting ageism. It is a process. Additionally, our language derives from our background, culture, and varying perspectives of the world. This is what makes us unique and diverse in our lived experiences, conversations, and relationships.

ALSO, we still have a responsibility to pause and think about how our beliefs, habits, and language may be reinforcing an ageist society. Let this brief checklist be a starting point to recognizing your language and your own internalized thoughts about aging.

Be open to exploring how you can adjust your everyday conversations about how we age and how we engage with individuals who are aging. The work is not always easy, but we are in this together!

let's disrupt *ageism!*

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notes

anti-ageism *resources*

[Changing the Narrative](#)

[Old School Clearing House](#)

[American Society on Aging \(ASA\)](#)

[Gero What?!](#)

[Age Friendly Vibes](#)

[Art Against Ageism](#)

[Centre for Ageing Better](#)

[National Center to Reframe Aging](#)

[The Dementia Guru - Anti-Ageism MERCH](#)

[Eff Their Aging Standards](#)

[Aging While Black](#)

[#AGEISMSUCKS](#)

click these links!


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Congratulations!

You're one-step closer to becoming an aging advocate.

Thanks for downloading this checklist. Please feel free to reach out for additional information and resources.
info@thedementiaguru.com

LET'S STAY CONNECTED



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