

Talking to Ourselves

Reframing Aging: My Pronouns are We, Us, Our

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AmeriCorps Seniors Association of Minnesota | October 10, 2023



A House is not a Home

When are older adults mis-‘placed’?

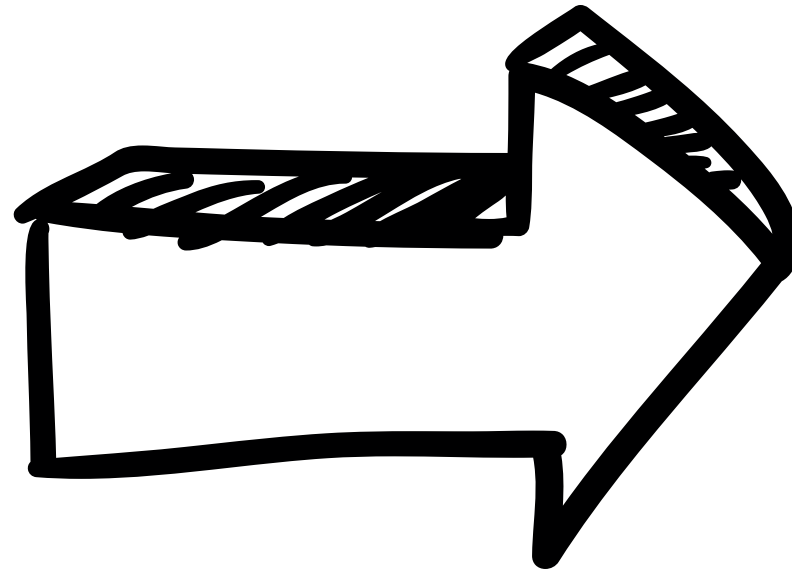
Dave Beal

Age Friendly Olmsted County Coordinator Family Service Rochester
Rochester Area Housing Alliance | June 14, 2023



“Reframing”

They
Them



We

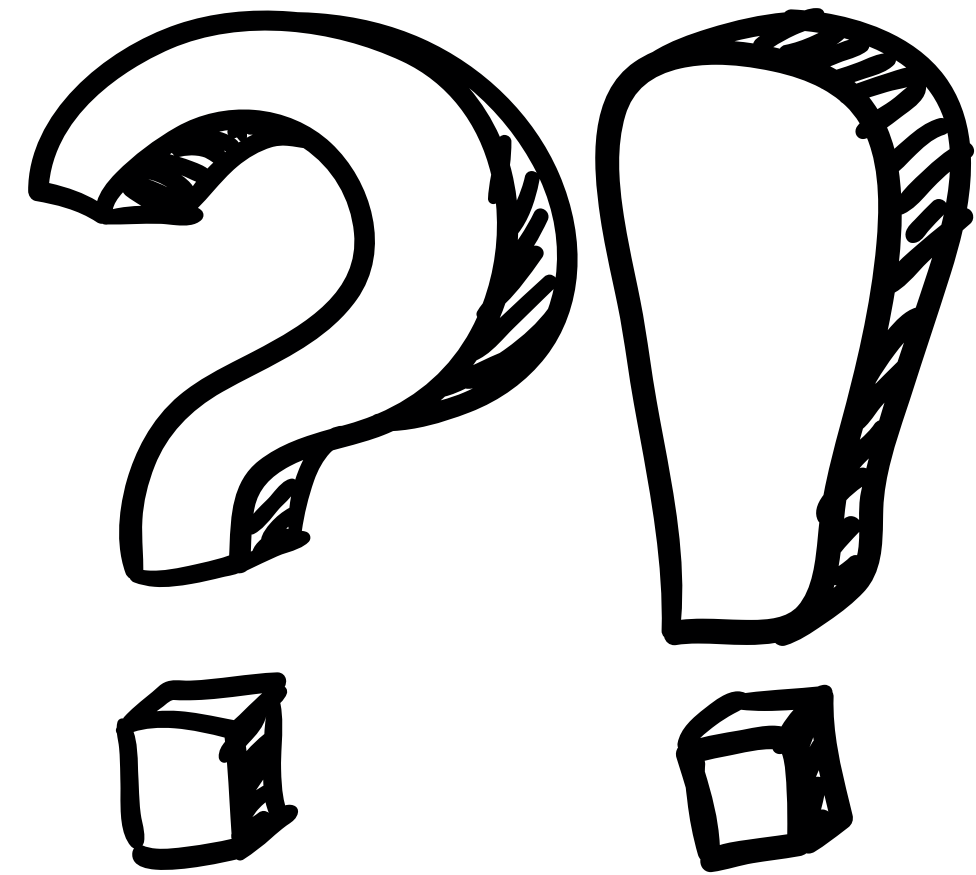
Us

Our



“Ageism”

“I don’t feel 70.”



Reframing Aging

1. Aging

- a. Demographics
- b. Age Discrimination

2. Ageism

- a. Definition
- b. Impacts

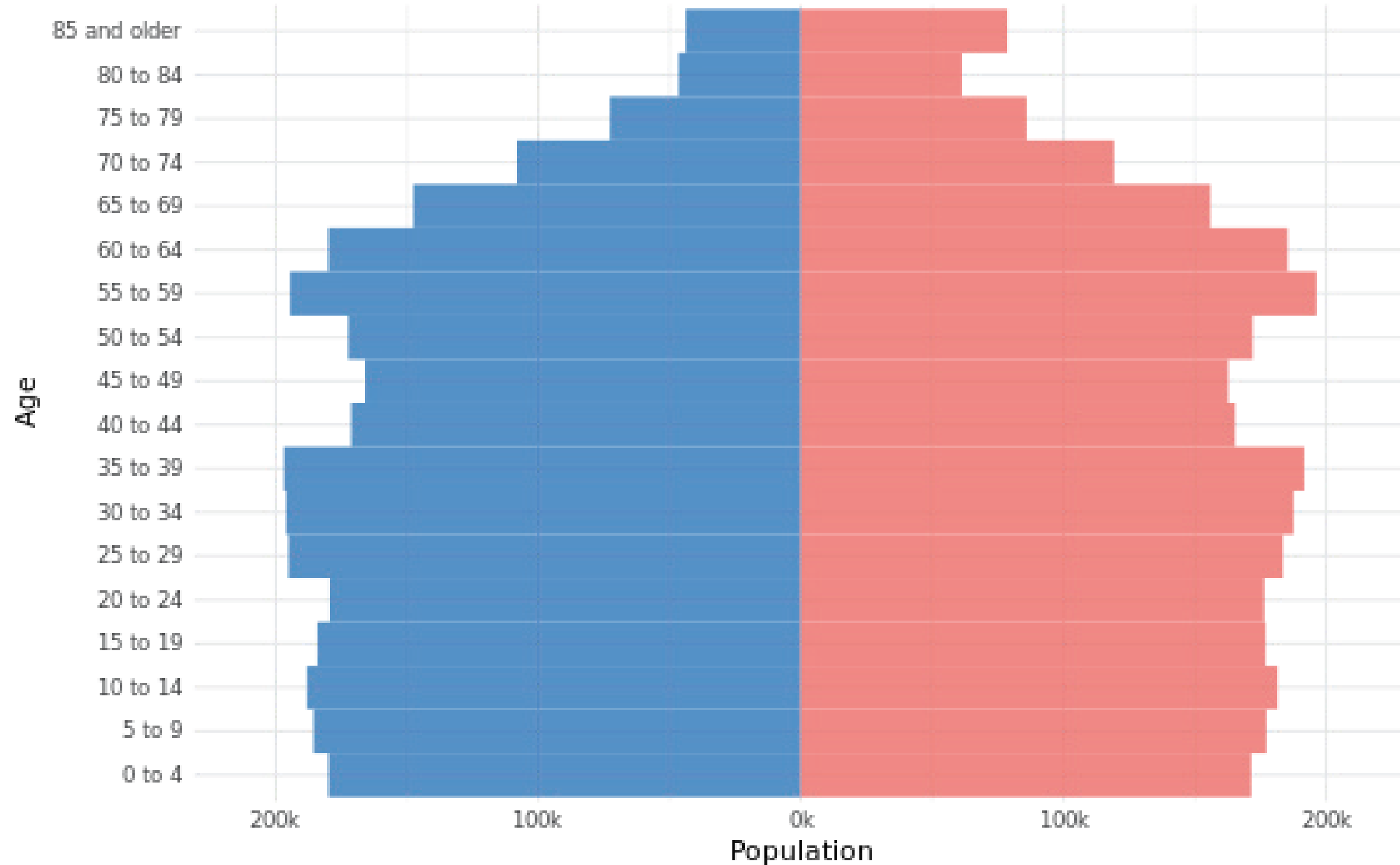
3. Framing

- a. FrameWorks Institute
- b. Frames

4. Reframing



Population structure in Minnesota



GREATEST 1901-1924

SILENT 1925-1945

BOOMERS 1946-1964

GEN X 1965-1979

MILLENNIALS 1980-1994

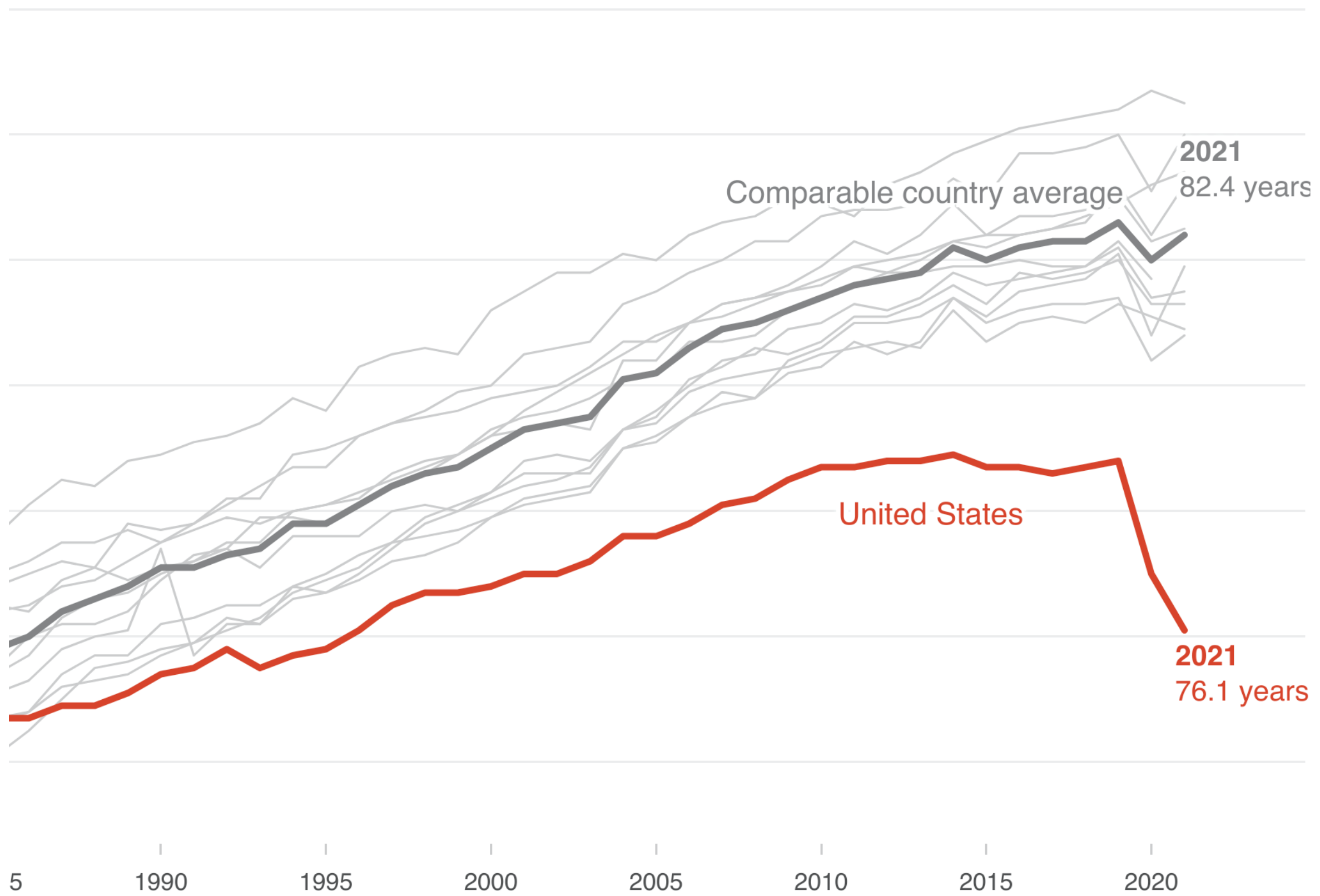
GEN Z 1995-2012

GEN ALPHA 2013-2025

Data source: 2019 US Census Bureau population estimates & tidycensus R package

50% can expect to live to 100





90%

of older adults in Minnesota live independently in their own homes

COMPILED by
COMPASS 



**6% living with relatives or roommates.
4% living in group facilities.**

- **Among older adults 3 in 4 own their homes.**
- **About a third households are paying an unaffordable (30+%) amount for housing.**
 - **1 in 5 older homeowners**
 - **More than half of older adult renters.**



“Seniors are living in our workforce housing.”



Age Discrimination Employment Act of 1975 prohibits “discrimination on the basis of age in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.”

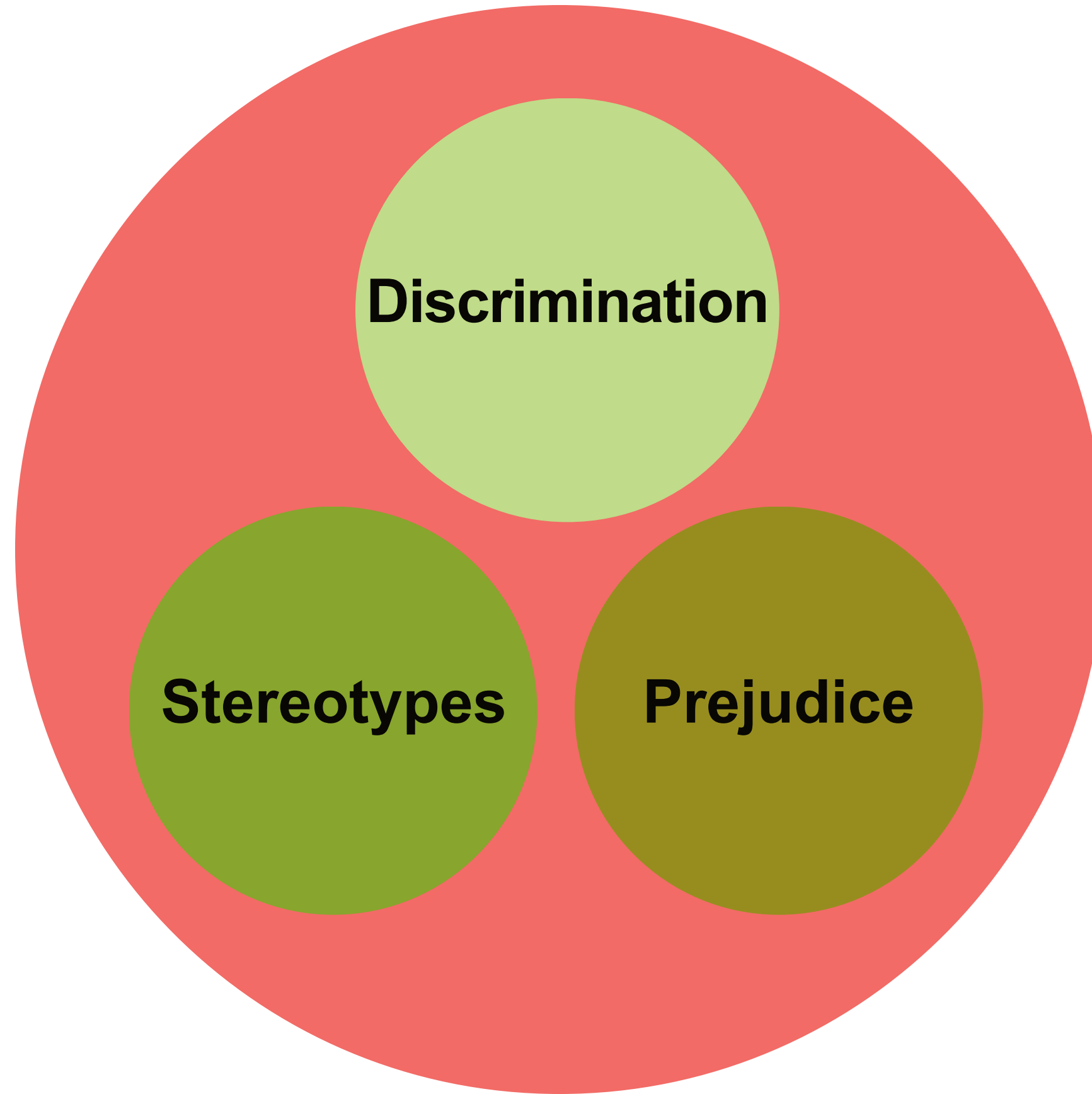


Age (40 and older) is one of nine protected characteristics along with race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, disability and genetic information (including family medical history).

Only 8% of employers include age as part of their DEI strategies - training, policies, metrics, and reporting.



Ageism



Ageism

Ageism has a detrimental impact on our quality of life, health and economy.

Ageism happens at every level, from internalized ageism in individuals to ageism embedded in our systems and policies.



AGEISM



IMPACTS



Take
a DEEP
BREATH



The logo for FrameWorks Institute features the words "FRAME" and "WORKS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. The text is centered within a white, stylized frame that resembles a square with a notch on the top and bottom right corners. The entire logo is set against a solid orange background.

**FRAME
WORKS**

Research by FrameWorks Institute shows that certain terms are often associated with – and reinforce – negative stereotypes about older people that result in stereotyping and discrimination.

Our language and the stories we tell can make a difference in reducing ageism.



What we emphasize

Framing is about the choices we make in...

What we say

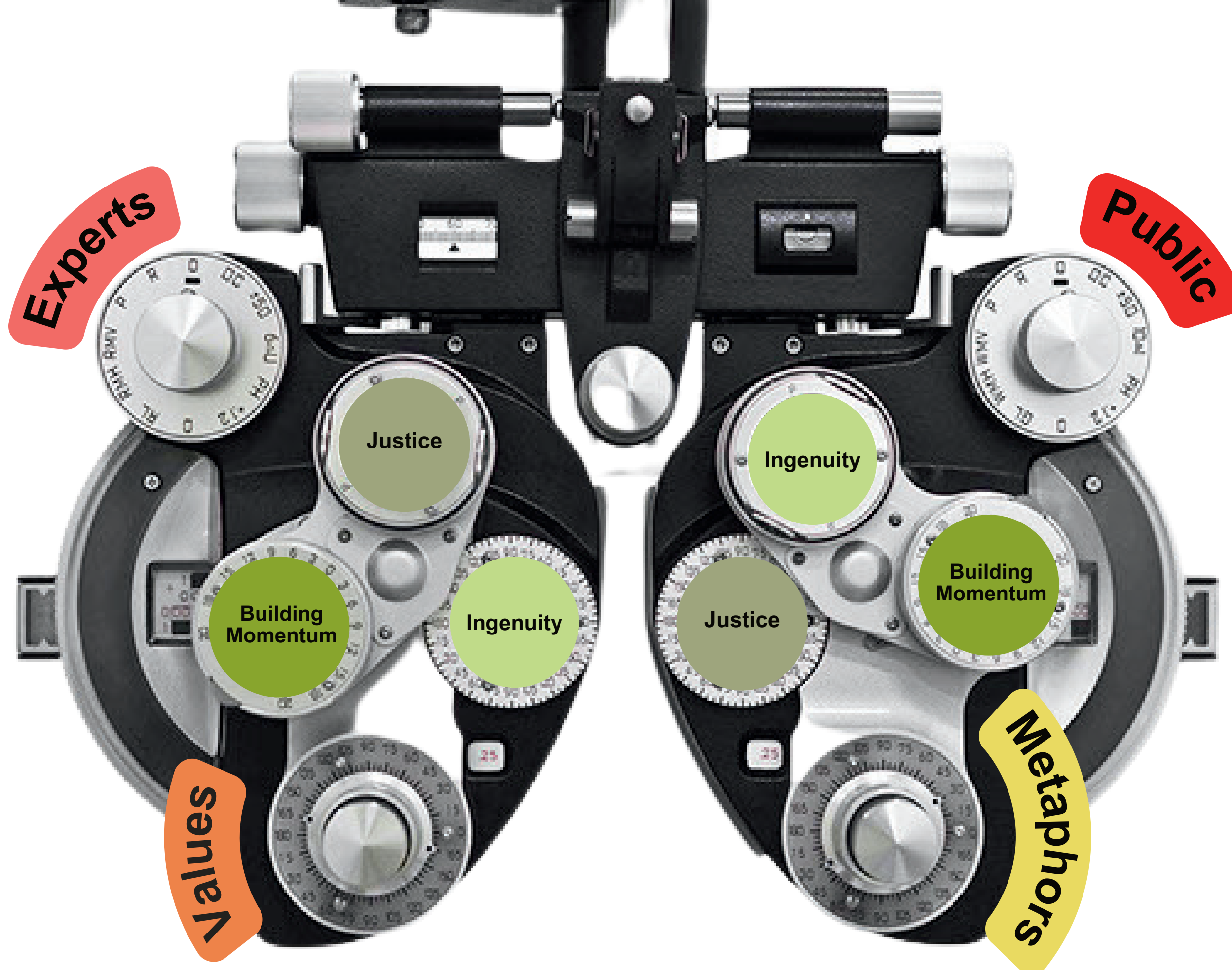


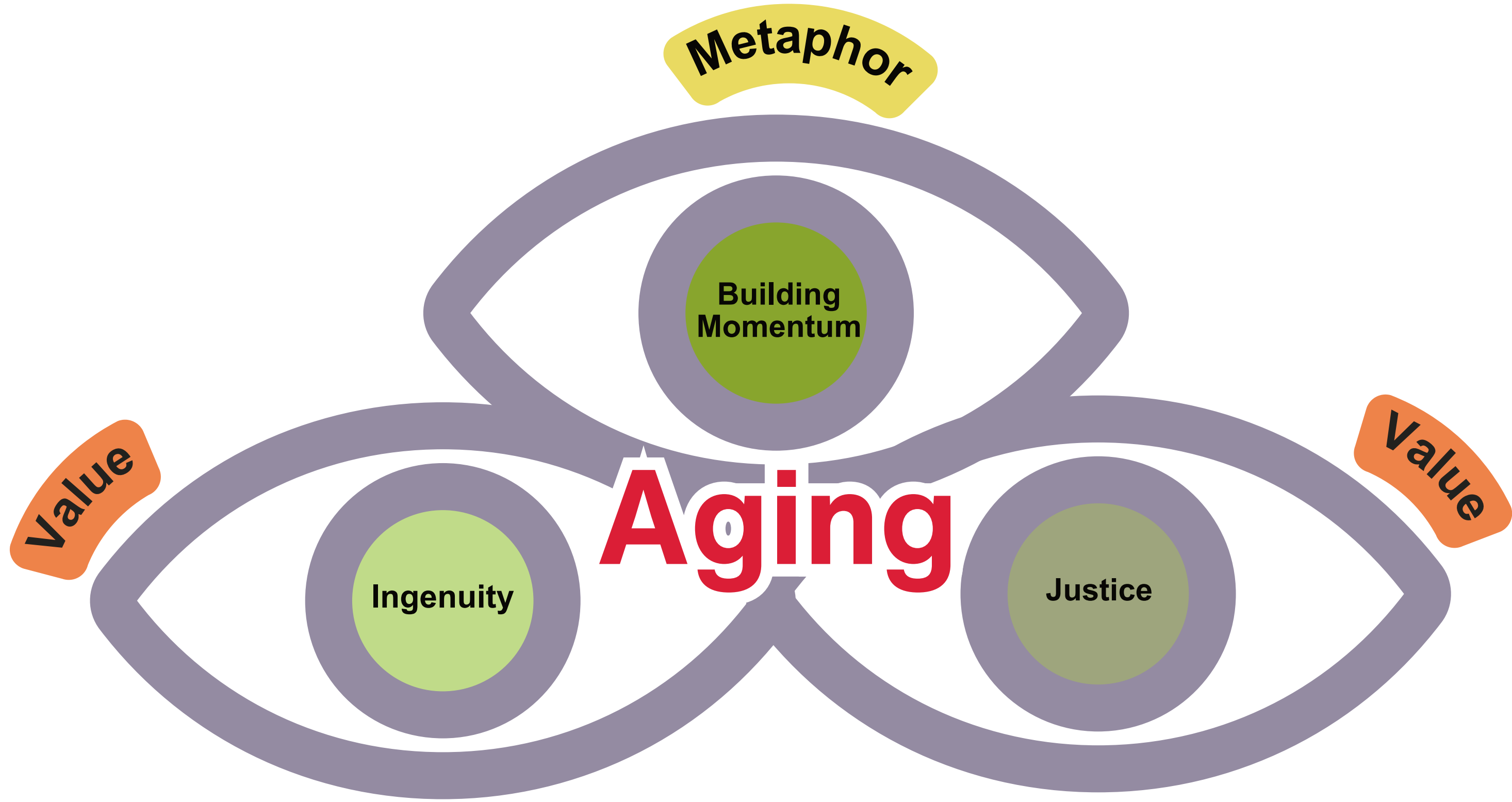
How we say it

...and how these choices shape how people think, feel, and act.

What we leave unsaid







Ideal vs. Perceived "Real"

- Accumulated wisdom
- Self-sufficiency
- Staying active
- Earned leisure
- Deterioration
- Loss of control
- Dependency
- Determinism

**Collective
Responsibility**

Individualism

- Lifestyle choices
- Financial planning

**Problems Can Be
Solved**

What's in the Swamp of...

Aging

**Social
Determinants**

Solutions

- Better individual choices & planning
- More education & information
- Fatalism: Nothing can be done

"Us" vs "Them"

- Older as "other"
- Zero sum
- Digital incompetence

Threat of Modernity

- Family dispersal
- Economic challenges
- Social Security is doomed

Ageism

**What Surrounds Us
Shapes Us**

How might the Aging Swamp impact how people see AmeriCorps and your work?

How might you make use of these values and metaphor in sharing the work you do with AmeriCorps Seniors?





Limited Mobility/Engaged

Limited Mobility/Disengaged





Tech competent

Tech Incompetent





Active

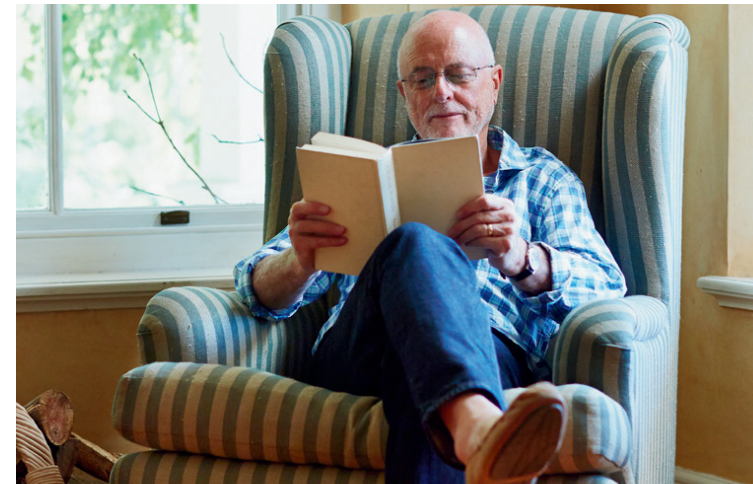
“Super Senior”





Workplace/Community/Household





Same Generation

Alone





Intergenerational



In closing - what else?

- **Actions speak too.**
- **Connect with others who are working to Reframe Aging.**





**AmeriCorps
Seniors**



**AmeriCorps | RSVP
Seniors**



**AmeriCorps
Seniors**

Senior Companion Program



**AmeriCorps
Seniors**

FOSTER GRANDPARENTS





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