ELDER CIRCLES
February 2020

Life Review: Reflecting On Our Wisdom Journey

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FEBRUARY 2020 ELDER CIRCLES SCHEDULE

NORTH TUCSON
St. Francis in the Foothills
4625 E. River Rd. (at Swan)
Second Fridays at 10:00 am
February 14

Flowing Wells Public Library
1730 W. Wetmore Rd., Study Room C
Third Wednesdays at 10:30 am
February 19

CENTRAL TUCSON
Jewish Community Center
3800 E. River Rd. (at Dodge)
First Sundays at 1:00 pm
February 2

LGBTQI Elder Circle
Cornerstone Fellowship
2902 N. Geronimo Ave.
Third Saturdays at 1:00 pm
February 15

EAST TUCSON
Udall Senior Center
7200 E. Tanque Verde Rd., Media Room
Discontinued

The following blog by Ronnie Dunetz was originally published on Sage-Ing International.

LIFE REVIEW: DEFINITELY NOT FOR OLD FOLKS ONLY!

Life review is often viewed as something you do late in life, a time when one is supposedly free from...
the stress of responsibilities, so why not reminisce? It is as if reminiscence is something that “old people do.” They, after all, as the stereotype has it, have plenty of time on their hands. The so-called “living in the past” is definitely not seen as an activity with too much value, far away from the “busy busy” “active active” life we are groomed to go after and appreciate. Leave the life review to the old folks, the thought goes, what’s more is that since they are on the average “closer to death”, they will have the urgency to do it...you know, prepare that legacy for the kids and grandkids before it is “too late”.

Time for a change, I submit. The time has come to take “life review” out of the “aging closet” and bring it onto the mainstream agenda for all. Life review, to my mind, is much more than a “nice to have” way of keeping older people busy with “something substantial”. In fact, as I see it, life review cuts to the core of our spiritual lives, it is a metaphor for a very seminal part of our capacity to develop wisdom.

I am reminded of a personal story that has been with me since the age of 14. Going into 9th grade, my family moved from Queens, NY, out to a small community on Long Island. It was also a move that I looked forward to, leaving my all-Jewish day school to attend public school. I really wanted it to work, and I knew I had one skill that would help me fit in quicker- I was quite adept at basketball. Thus, when I arrived at school, I tried out for the school team and was accepted. I

GREEN VALLEY
New location and time!
Joyner-Green Valley Library
601 N La Cañada Dr
Fourth Tuesdays at 1:30 pm
February 25

MARANA
Wheeler Taft Abbet Sr. Public Library
7800 N. Schisler Dr.
Discontinued

ORO VALLEY
Oro Valley Public Library
1305 W. Naranja Dr.
Second Wednesdays at 10:00 am
February 12

LIFE REVIEW: SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON

In this month's blog, Ronnie Dunetz proposes that all of us, including the younger generations, can benefit from ongoing "life-reviewing". Reflecting on our life as it unfolds, he says, plays a big role in our development of wisdom and resilience.

Would you like to become a more active "life-reviewer"?

Legacy Project has compiled a list of sample life review questions that might help you get started. Below are a few examples from their list. Click here to see the full list.

Are there times of your life that you remember more vividly than others? Why?

How should a person prepare for old age? Is there anything you wish you’d done differently?

What things are most important to you now? Why?

If you won $1 million tomorrow, what would you do with the money?
was thoroughly excited until I received notice that nearly all games would be on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, I was an observant Jew who did not drive on the Sabbath and there was no way to get to the games without driving. After a short period of intense deliberation, I told the coach that I would not be able to make the games. He was very forthcoming and suggested that he “talk with the Rabbi” and get a “special dispensation”. I assured him it was not about that. It was a tough decision but I went with my beliefs of that time- no more basketball for me.

When I related this story to a friend from another town a few months later, my friend was clearly shocked- how could I do such a stupid thing, to lose my “entry card to popularity” at school...for religion? As he put it, “Do what most people do, take up religion when you are old and need it, not now when you are active and energetic”. I never did forget that comment all these years...

Just as religion is not just for the old, neither is life review. The process of life review is the process of reflection, of the “examined life”, in the exact spirit of Plato’s view that “The unexamined life is not worth living.” Reflecting on your life as it unfolds and not only when it is in its “later stages”, is a major avenue to the development of wisdom. Sociologist Monika Ardelt believes that individuals develop wisdom as personality characteristics encompassing reflection,

GATHER THE ELDERS 2020: A REVIEW IN PICTURES

On January 24, 2020, more than 80 elders gathered at the Jewish Community Center to connect with others, learn from inspiring presenters, and share their own stories in facilitated Circles. Whether you were able to attend the event or couldn't make it this time, we hope you enjoy our selection of photos from this fun, enriching morning.
compassion, and the pursuit of truth. Life review- or perhaps more correctly “life reviewing”- is a cornerstone of observing, reflecting and amending your ways as you walk further on the path of your life. Calling attention to the narratives that comprise our life helps us become active players in our very own lives, noting the stories that disempower us towards stagnation as well as creating those stories that inspire us to grow and evolve. When we are active “life-reviewers” we assume responsibility to get behind the wheel and steer. We might be quite limited in what we can do, but we will never be powerless as life-reviewing keeps us reflective, learning and gaining insights. Life reviewing builds resilience and resilience helps us become more astute life-reviewers on our path.

Reb Zalman is quoted as having asked: “Have you downloaded your life experience for future generations? Have you begun your legacy work?” There is no doubt that life review has great meaning for elders, our later years facilitate a powerful process that can be both healing and inspirational for the younger generations. However, I feel the field is wide open for bringing the spirit and approach of “life reviewing” out of the closet and onto the agenda of younger generations. Life review, which sits at the center of reflection and at the core of the cultivation of wisdom is not something that should be denied the younger generations.

And who is better suited to lead the pack and teach the life-review
approach than sage-ing elders? Life review is too important to be relegated to later years, it beckons us to teach the world, even if the "world is" not really sure what it is they need to learn. We need to get life review out of the closet and into the living rooms of us all. Life reviewing will help us all to learn the stories, learn OUR stories and what we can and want to do about them.

“If you don’t know the trees you may be lost in the forest, but if you don’t know the stories you may be lost in life.” – Siberian Elder

~Ronnie Dunetz

Ronnie Dunetz, MBA International, is a senior life and career coach, a veteran group facilitator, storyteller and free-lance writer. He develops and leads programs for personal and spiritual development for people in their second half of life, with an emphasis on the integration of wisdom emanating from diverse cultures, philosophies and ways of life.

ELDER CIRCLES FACILITATOR TRAINING

Are you an enthusiastic supporter of Elder Circles and wondering what goes into leading a Circle? Join us on

Thursday, February 6, 2020
12:30 - 5:00 pm
HONORING A LIFE: ADVANCE CARE PLANNING CONVERSATIONS

Thursday, February 27, 2020
9:00 - 11:00 am
5049 E Broadway Blvd,
Suite 125

How do you hope to spend the final stage of your life?

Have you planned adequately for any medical situations that might arise for you?

Who else needs to know what your wishes are so that you can receive what you want?

"Honoring a Life" provides a wealth of information, including an explanation of the importance of advance care planning, an introduction to methods for making decisions and conversing with others on the topic, and a review of the two kinds of documents accepted as legal and binding by the State of Arizona.

Because seating is limited, registration is required for this FREE event.

FAREWELL CATHERINE TORNBOM!

The Center's former program is retiring after nine years of service with Our Family Services. Catherine came on board in November of 2010 with the Center for Community Dialogue & Training. She worked tirelessly growing the Center with the Leadership Council from the long-standing community mediation program and the grassroots Tucsonan's for Civility in 2011.

Throughout her time with Our Family Services, Catherine increased the Center's capacity to meet the needs of the community.

* Special Offers: Bring a friend and save 20% on both registrations. If you have participated in this training before, you save 50% if you take it again. Please contact Melanie Rudolph to make use of these offers.

Register Here
MANY THANKS TO OUR 2020 GATHER THE ELDERS CO-SPONSORS!

Through grass roots development of the Center’s Community Forum Model, continuing to support the mediation program including elder mediation, and developing highly effective workshops focused on conflict resolution and communication. She also focused on expanding the power of Circles to include Elder Circles, Restorative Justice Circles, and Connection Circles for Youth.

Please join us on February 4 to thank Catherine for all of her work in support of our community and wishing her well in all future endeavors.

We hope you will celebrate with us and wish her a fond farewell!

Tuesday, February 4, 2020
4:00 to 6:00 pm
5049 E Broadway Blvd, Suite 125

RSVP Here