



Value

Justice

Why does it matter? What's at stake?



The story you're telling:

A just society treats everyone as equals, but right now, we are marginalizing older people and minimizing their contributions. To live up to our ideals, we must change this.



Strategically redirects thinking away from patterns such as:

- Us vs. Them • Individualism • Aging = Decline and Deterioration • Fatalism



Concepts and ideas included in this frame element:

- A just society treats all members of society as equals.
- Right now our society is not treating older people as equals; in fact, we are marginalizing their participation and minimizing their contributions.
- As equal members of society, older adults have a rightful claim to be full participants in all spheres of life: socially, culturally, economically, and legally.
- To live up to our ideals, we need to reshape society so that older people are fully included in our communities.



User Notes:

- Keep the focus on society's responsibility to treat all people as equals. Avoid slipping into appeals based on compassion, mercy, or the right to dignity, as these can reinforce the notion of older people as "others" and evoke paternalistic attitudes.
- Avoid talking about ageism as a "civil rights issue." FrameWorks research found that this phrasing led the public to compare ageism to racism and sexism and conclude that ageism was not a comparably serious problem. It also narrowed people's focus to instances of ageism that they thought could be addressed through litigation.



Value

Ingenuity

Why does it matter? What's at stake?



The story you're telling:

As more Americans live longer and healthier lives, we need to tap into our national ingenuity, so we can adjust our systems and policies to make the most of this new reality.



Strategically redirects thinking away from patterns such as:

- Fatalism • Us vs. Them • Individualism • Solution = More Information



Concepts and ideas included in this frame element:

- Americans are problem-solvers. When we see an opportunity, we figure out how to seize it—and when something isn't working, we rethink our approach.
- Replacing outdated practices with new, smarter ways of doing things is the key to our nation's ingenuity.
- As Americans live longer and healthier lives, this presents new opportunities for our communities. It's up to us to figure out how to make the most of them.
- As Americans live longer lives, this also presents new problems. Fortunately, we have a long tradition of finding innovative solutions to challenges. As a nation of problem-solvers, we need to tap into our ingenuity to figure out better ways to [insert your issue/idea/solution].
- Let's try out new ideas and innovative approaches to improve how our society supports older people and responds to aging.



Explanatory Metaphor

Building Momentum

A metaphor for people's continuous growth over the life course and older adults' contributions



The story you're telling:

As we get older, we gather momentum through the build-up of experiences and insights. This momentum can contribute to our society's vitality, and so, as a society, we should do all we can to support and make the most of it.



Strategically redirects thinking away from patterns such as:

- Us vs. Them
- Aging = Decline and Deterioration
- Dependency
- Modern Life Is the Problem



Concepts and ideas included in this frame element:

- **Aging is a continuous process:** As we age, all of us are continually changing, and this dynamic process includes positive aspects at every stage.
- **Aging involves social, emotional, and cognitive growth:** When we're younger, we need a boost to get moving. As we get older, we gather momentum through the build-up of experiences and insights. We gain the power of perspective. Our abilities move us forward toward more complex goals.
- **Americans have shared fates; we all affect the collective:** Each of us contributes to the forward motion and progress of our communities/nation.
- **Older adults are a resource for our communities:** The energy that we build up as we get older is what powers us to move our communities forward.
- **Positive outcomes are possible but aren't guaranteed:** Society has an opportunity to capture more of this momentum, but that requires changes to our policies, practices, and public structures. We need to foster environments that help people build the momentum that can move our communities forward.
- **It would be a shame to miss out on this momentum:** If we fail to adjust, we risk losing this dynamic source of power.



User Notes:

- Avoid individualizing this metaphor. This frame isn't about a single older person appreciating her newfound wisdom or learning to age "successfully." It's about society recognizing, stewarding, and benefiting from a previously unrecognized resource.
- Choose pronouns carefully. Phrasing that positions older people as a discrete group of "others" can cue Us vs. Them thinking, which is unproductive. Instead, use inclusive phrasing: we all gather momentum as we age.
- Don't overdo the positivity. While it's important to channel public attention to the upsides of the later stages of life, it's also important to assert that we are facing issues that demand public attention and new approaches. Take care to avoid creating the impression that there's so much "energy" out there that supportive policies are unnecessary.
- Don't prescribe a path for the momentum: avoid suggesting that there's one right way to age or that "contributions" only come in certain forms.