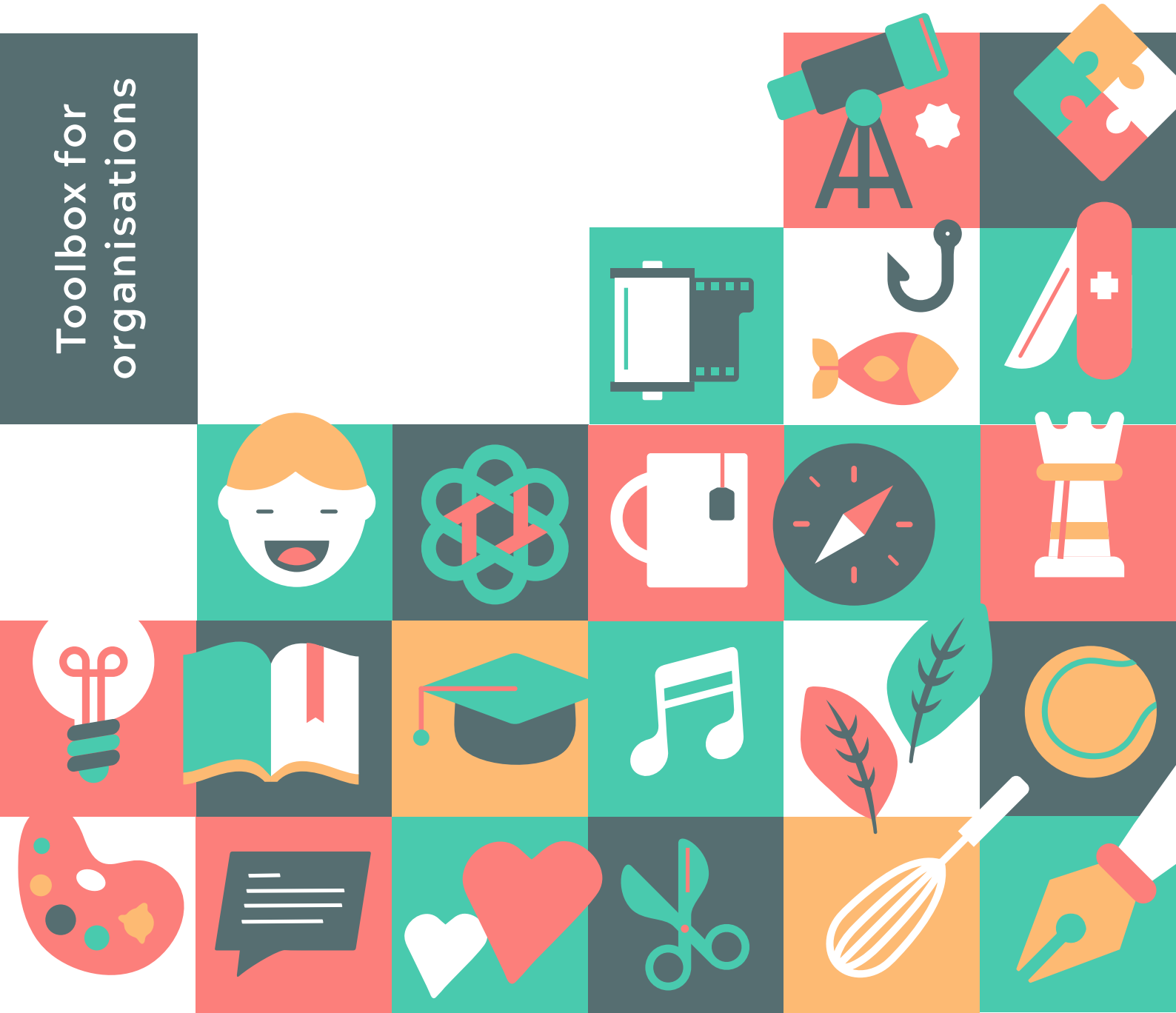
*in*visible talents*!*

Encouraging and recognising the contributions of people 80+

Toolbox for organisations



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WELCOME TO OUR *IN*VISIBLE TALENTS TOOLBOX!

For more information on the *in*visible talents project, please visit www.invisible-talents.eu
Try our Online Test here.

The Toolbox was developed within the Erasmus+ project ***in*visible talents**. *Encouraging and recognising the contributions of people 80+. in***visible talents** aims to promote the participation of older men and women (especially 80+) and to make their talents, experience and contributions to their communities visible. We cooperate closely with health and social service providers in residential and community settings as well as with citizens' initiatives working with older and very old people.

Workshops and an *Online Test* developed by the ***in*visible talents** partnership encourage interested organisations to ask themselves:
Do we acknowledge the contributions of older people and if so, in what way?
Do we support older people in (further) developing and contributing their talents?
Do we make their contributions, interests and experiences visible? How could we improve the visibility of older people in our organisation, our community?

As organisations involved in our project showed great interest in concrete tools and activities to work on the issues of the ***in*visible talents** project, we decided to share helpful material tested in workshops and meetings with professionals and volunteers working with older people as well as with older people themselves.

This Toolbox provides concrete activities to reflect on stereotypes regarding older people and helpful tools to support staff members and older people in (re-)detecting their 'talents', resources and dreams. Some activities mainly address teams working with older people (e.g. Tools to encourage staff to reflect on stereotypes). Others have been tailored to the target group of older people. Some activities for older people have been developed and tested within *The Dream Factory*, a complex and inspiring methodology developed and applied in the Netherlands. We included a short introduction to the Dream Factory approach and a selection of tools in the chapter *The Dream Factory – People with wishes* of this Toolbox.

With this Toolbox we want to support organisations and individuals interested in:

- ☐ REFLECTING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE STEREOTYPING AS WELL AS AGEISM,
- ☐ JOINING A DIALOGUE ON 'HIDDEN TALENTS',
- ☐ FOSTERING A 'CULTURE OF APPRECIATION' AND BECOMING (MORE) 'TALENTS-FRIENDLY' AND
- ☐ SUPPORTING (OLDER) PEOPLE IN FINDING OUT ABOUT THEIR WISHES AND INTERESTS.

TIP: If you would like to learn more about experiences gained in our partner countries and activities carried out with partner organisations, please have a look at our ***in*visible talents** Brochure: www.invisible-talents.eu/outcomes.

Enjoy reading & exploring!

"OLDER PEOPLE ARE…"
TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO REFLECT ON STEREOTYPES ON OLDER PEOPLE

Basically, stereotypes are defined as commonly known beliefs about a social group or type of individual. Stereotypes may be positive or negative, but most of them are stigmatising. Age-based stereotypes or ageist attitudes are potential obstacles to the equal social participation of older and very old people. They influence whether a person's talents, contributions or views are acknowledged. Studies show that stereotypes on older adults influence how we talk to or about them and even the topics of conversations.

Interested in reflecting on age-based role models and stereotypes? The following activities might be inspiring initial steps to determine and analyse ageist attitudes and break down stereotypes about older adults:

Concepts of ageing

This activity aims to raise awareness of different concepts of ageing as well as the diversity of lifestyles, talents and interests of older people. Participants are encouraged to self-reflect on their images of ageing and (possible) stereotypes of older people.

Posters, photos or postcards showing different images of older people and ageing are displayed on the walls or put on the table. Participants are invited to pick a poster or postcard that especially appeals to them. The following questions might help to start a dialogue and discussion on diverse images of older people and ageing:

- WHY DID I CHOOSE THE PHOTO?
- WHAT KINDS OF IMAGES OF OLDER PEOPLE ESPECIALLY APPEAL TO ME?
- WHAT ARE MY ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS MY OWN AGEING?
- WHICH AGE DO I CONSIDER MYSELF "OLD"?

Participants discuss these or similar questions and share different perspectives on ageing and older people.

Material needed: Various images, photos or postcards of older people

Myths about older people

This activity aims to reflect on stereotypes and myths that surround older people and the process of ageing.

Based on the following 10 common myths about older people, participants are encouraged to assess and discuss their individual age stereotypes and reflect on how these may impact their views on older people and the process of ageing.

TIPS & TRICKS: Prepare examples that disprove these myths (e.g. research results, examples of good practice, experiences, etc.) and also ask participants for their views and experiences. To close the activity, you could exchange ideas on how to counteract these negative stereotypes (e.g. moving past labels and treating people as individuals with unique experiences, preferences and interests, and examples from participants).

Write the following myths on a poster and discuss them in the group:

1. MOST OLDER PEOPLE LIVE IN INSTITUTIONS.
2. RETIREMENT IS LESS DIFFICULT FOR WOMEN THAN IT IS FOR MEN.
3. DEMENTIA, SICKNESS AND DISABILITY ARE TO BE EXPECTED OR COME WITH OLD AGE.
4. OLDER WORKERS ARE LESS PRODUCTIVE THAN YOUNGER ONES.
5. OLDER PEOPLE CANNOT LEARN, ARE SET IN THEIR WAYS, UNABLE TO CHANGE.
6. OLDER PEOPLE ARE WEAK, HELPLESS, SWEET, KIND, AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD.
7. OLDER PEOPLE ARE BORING, FORGETFUL, UNPRODUCTIVE, GROUCHY AND CANTANKEROUS.
8. OLD AGE BEGINS AT 60.
9. OLDER PEOPLE ARE TOO OLD TO BE CONSULTED ABOUT ANYTHING – EVEN THEIR OWN PREFERENCES AND VIEWS.
10. THE MAJORITY OF OLDER PEOPLE SEE THEMSELVES AS BEING IN POOR HEALTH, ARE LONELY, AND ISOLATED FROM FAMILIES/FRIENDS.

Material needed: poster with a selection of myths

Source List of myths: Excerpt from the ***Senior Citizen Times*** (2011) see BetterTogether.sa.gov.au

Reflection on individual experiences when working with people 80+

The target group are employees and volunteers who work with and for older people. Several organisations and individuals reflect in a workshop on their experiences of working with and dealing with very old people.

The following three questions can be discussed:

- WHAT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE WITH THE TARGET GROUP OF VERY OLD PEOPLE?
- WHAT ARE THE PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF VERY OLD PEOPLE?
- ARE THERE BARRIERS TO COOPERATION?

The questions offer a basis for reflection. Other topics can develop based on this, such as:

- THE TERM 'VERY OLD', HOW IS THE TERM PERCEIVED AND WHICH AGE GROUP IS UNDERSTOOD BY IT?
- THE TERM TALENT, HOW IS IT UNDERSTOOD? IS IT PERHAPS MISLEADING?
- THE TERM PARTICIPATION, WHAT MUST BE GIVEN TO MAKE PARTICIPATION POSSIBLE?

It is to be expected that the topics that emerge from the discussion will be oriented towards the fields of activity and priorities of the participating organisations. This will allow the participants to gain insights into other fields of work and topics, all of which deal with the target group of the very old.

Material needed: poster with a selection of myths

TIPS & TRICKS: It is advisable to invite representatives of different organisations to get to know the handling of the topic from the point of view of other institutions and to think creatively.

"I AM GOOD AT..."
TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE REFLECTION ON INTERESTS & TALENTS

The following tools and activities might be helpful to start a dialogue and reflection on individual interests and (perhaps) redetect some hidden talents. We collected some tools that are useful in reflection sessions with staff members and teams as well as with older people themselves. Please consider that we have a very broad understanding of the term "talents" and use it as a synonym for experiences, knowledge, competencies and interests. "Talents" – as we understand them – are more than "gifts": Talents can be developed, (re-)detected and shared with people around.

Talent Tree

The method *talent tree* has proven to be very helpful in approaching the topic, start a dialogue on (hidden) talents and encourage participants to think about their strengths and interests. In a first step, participants discuss, in groups of two, questions or statements such as "What 'talents' do I/we have?", "What do I particularly find quite easy?" or "I can help others with...". They collect their talents or strengths they (could) bring to the group, the organisation, their community, etc. Results of the discussions are collected, written on "leaves" and added to the *talent tree*. Thus, the *talent tree* makes a wide range of talents visible.

Material needed: Poster with a painted tree, leaves (cards), pens in different colours.

TIPS & TRICKS: Invite participants to add strengths and talents they see in the other participants. The exercise can thus positively expand one's self-image and contribute to the teambuilding process.

When working with staff members, it might be interesting to move from the personal to the organisational level. The following questions might be helpful:

- ☐ WHAT HELPED YOU TO DEVELOP YOUR INTERESTS/TALENTS?
- ☐ WHICH SUPPORTING STRUCTURES EXIST/ ARE NEEDED IN THE ORGANISATION TO PROMOTE THE TALENTS AND INTERESTS OF MEMBERS/PARTICIPANTS/CLIENTS/ STAFF/VOLUNTEERS?

Answers can be added to the roots of the *talent tree* (→ *helpful resources/nutrition in the organisation*) and the sunbeams (→ *needed resources from outside/the organisation*).

Talents reflection cards

A very attractive way to spark meaningful conversations and a reflection on one's talents, interests or abilities are "provoking questions". There are card sets including questions about strengths, interests and positive abilities available (*e.g. Stärken-Schatzkiste für Therapie und Beratung, Beltz, German*). However, it is quite easy to create your own little set of cards. The following examples of possible questions, for instance, might have the potential to inspire stories, reflection and emotions:

- ☐ THE LIST OF MY STRENGTHS STARTS WITH...
- ☐ I FEEL STRONG WHEN...
- ☐ I AM ESPECIALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT...
- ☐ MY POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS ARE...
- ☐ EVERYBODY HAS TALENTS. FIVE THINGS THAT I AM ESPECIALLY GOOD AT...
- ☐ THAT'S QUITE EASY FOR ME...

We used cards in different variants: The cards are laid out face up so that the participants can choose one or more cards to address them. Or participants pick one card without seeing the questions and statements beforehand.

In the next step, participants exchange their answers to the questions either in small groups (2–3 persons) or in the whole group. Each person reads their card(s) aloud and answers the questions or completes the beginning of the sentence.

Cooperation partners use questions as "ice-breakers" and to start a reflection on the talents and interests of their older participants. They appreciate this tool as it helps to discover and share new information about each other in a funny and relaxed atmosphere.

Material needed: Set of cards (self-made or from a commercial provider). E.g.: German: *Stärken-Schatzkiste für Therapie und Beratung (Beltz Therapiekarten) von Falk Scholz,* English: *At My Best Strength Cards, Empowering Questions Cards*

Talents Map

The main idea of a *talents map* is to make the talents of older and very old and young inhabitants as well as talents-promoting organisations and locations in the communities visible. The method can be used at events, such as community health days or neighbourhood activities. Participants are invited to contribute their individual favourite locations, organisations and offers that inspire and invite them to bring in their talents. Individual talents or abilities, ideas and interests can also be noted on a large speech bubble. People are photographed together with their 'talent speech bubble' and added to the *talents map* (see photo).

The concept can be easily adapted to the framework and interests of other municipalities and settings.

Material needed: A map of the community, city and region, some cards and pencils.

TIPS & TRICKS: Prepare some cards with organisations, institutions and locations that promote talents of older and younger people in the community in advance. Perhaps there are also some people interested in preparing their talents speech bubble. People are more likely to contribute their ideas if there are already some examples on the map.

What‘s in my backpack?

This activity uses the metaphor of a backpack to encourage people to unpack the factors that make up who they are. The idea is quite simple: Every one of us carries a backpack full of experiences with us. Most people think of negative things, but in this activity the focus is on positive and inspiring experiences in life. People realise that there is always a “story behind” each person. Participants are asked to draw their individual backpack and to fill it with positive experiences, memories, stories, ideas, etc. they came across during their life.

In the next step, everybody unpacks their backpack and shares their “story”. To encourage discussions, participants are invited to add their own backpacks, perspectives or thoughts.

Material needed: Paper, (coloured) pencils

TIPS & TRICKS: You might use a real backpack and objects as a stimulus to make your explanation livelier.

To support participants who do not want to draw, images of backpacks could be provided. Participants just need to pack their individual rucksack.

Even though the focus is on positive experiences in life, dealing with personal issues around who we are, can raise sensitive issues for some participants. As instructors, we need to be aware of these and be able to deal with them.

Source This method has been contributed by the facilitators of *Sweet 70*, a community of older people who meet every second week and develop a new perspective on ageing. Thanks for this! www.broedstraten.nl

Lifelines – Booklet

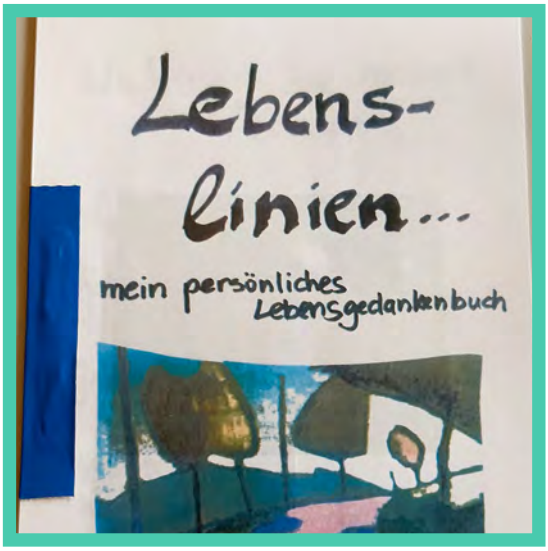
This booklet can be used as a knowledge base for nursing staff or in other settings. If necessary, the staff has the booklet to hand in order to be able to respond to their clientele.

Participants are supported in developing a booklet of their "lifelines", finding answers/ photos to the following statements:

- ☐ PICTURES, WHICH SHOW ME...
- ☐ WHAT I LIKE TO DO...
- ☐ IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN MY LIFE
- ☐ SAD MOMENTS/DIFFICULT TIMES...
- ☐ WHAT LIFTED ME UP/IN WHICH I BELIEVE...
- ☐ WHAT CHEERS ME UP...
- ☐ MY DEARLY BELOVED "LITTLE SINS"...
- ☐ IMPORTANT FAMILIAR/IMPORTANT PERSONS IN MY LIFE...
- ☐ WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO TELL MY LOVED ONES...

Material needed: DIN A4 sheets, filling strip, pen, photos

TIPS & TRICKS: If used in a nursing home: The booklet should be placed in the same place in every room so that the staff can have it to hand quickly when needed.



"This booklet was written with my approval and [name of a person] should have it later in time."

Source This booklet is used in a nursing home in Germany, Kleeblatt Seniorenzentren Maintal, Bischofsheim. www.seniorenzentren-maintal.de

"LET'S DO..." TOOLS THAT SUPPORT IN BECOMING (MORE) "TALENTS-FRIENDLY"

What makes an organisation talents-friendly? In this section we would like to support organisations in collecting concrete ideas on how to consider and promote talents as well as planning new formats or next steps.

Reflection based on the *in***visible talents** Online Test

Based on the *in***visible talents** *Online Test* the following questions could be discussed with employees and volunteers from organisations working with and for older people.

- ☐ DO WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OLDER PEOPLE AND IF SO, IN WHAT WAY?
- ☐ DO WE SUPPORT OLDER PEOPLE IN (FURTHER) DEVELOPING AND CONTRIBUTING THEIR TALENTS?
- ☐ DO WE MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS, INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCES VISIBLE?
- ☐ HOW COULD WE IMPROVE THE VISIBILITY OF OLDER PEOPLE IN OUR ORGANISATION, OUR COMMUNITY?

Depending on the size or the group these questions could be discussed in small groups first, then as a class. The discussion supports the exchange of ideas and ideally results in the implementation of (new) internal measures within the organisation to appreciate, promote and make visible the talents of the very old.

Material needed: Pen, cards, presentation wall, flipchart or blackboard

TIPS & TRICKS: Contributions can be written on cards or directly on a wall/flipchart. This makes it easier for participants to respond to individual ideas, follow the discussion and take notes. It is advisable to invite representatives from different organisations to ensure the greatest possible exchange of ideas.

Source *in***visible talents** *Online Test*, see www.invisible-talents.eu

Finding new formats together

The following activity might be helpful for some organisations to find out about the interests and abilities of their participants/clients/members and to develop new formats and offers that fit these interests.

Participants are asked to get together in groups of 2–3 to talk about interests and hobbies they had in the past, what they like to do nowadays and what they would like to do in the future. Past and present activities and hobbies and wishes and dreams for the future are collected on different coloured cards

Example: the past on blue cards, the present on pink cards and the future on green cards.

The instructor puts the cards on the board. Participants discuss together how interests and wishes could be realised. Perhaps there are some common dreams in the groups or participants could support each other in achieving their goals. Furthermore, the visualisation of interests and wishes is helpful for discussing possible new formats to be offered by the organisation to support participants in realising and exploring their interests.

Material needed: Cards in three different colours, pens, pin board and pins or blackboard and magnets.

TIPS & TRICKS: The activity should be adapted according to the audience. If group work is not possible or accepted, the moderator can also enter into one-to-one conversations.

Mood Board

A mood board is a collage of ideas. It supports teams in collecting and communicating ideas in a visual way and provides a vision at the start of a project or initiative. Within the *in***visible talents** project, partners used this tool as part of brainstorming processes. Staff and volunteers of nursing homes worked on the following question: How could we support older people in contributing their talents and improve the visibility of older people in our organisation?

On mood boards they developed and collected initial ideas for concrete activities.

In the first step, participants work in small groups of 3–4 and collect aspects they consider as relevant. To encourage "thinking outside the box" a wide range of material and inputs (e.g. statements, images, visual elements from magazines, pictures) as well as pencils and markers in different colours are provided. Participants are also invited to add individual feelings, open questions or comments.

The mood boards are presented and discussed in the whole group. Based on different perspectives and ideas, the team agree on concrete further steps and activities to support their clients in contributing their talents and improve their visibility.

Material needed: Flipchart paper, glue, scissors, colour pencils, crayons, underlines, magazines, pictures and photos, visual inspiration from the internet, logo of the organisation, etc.

TIPS & TRICKS: It might be helpful and encouraging to mention that every mood board is different and there are no 'rules' that dictate what a mood board must include or what it must look like. Teams and individuals have 'creative freedom' and are free to add whatever seems relevant and appealing to them.

In order to capture thoughts, impressions, and feelings according to the issue, participants could also take/collect and bring along photos, images, etc. of everything that inspires them.

Source Basically, mood boards are a very common method used by designers to communicate their vision. There are blogs that provide helpful tips and tricks to create mood boards: e.g. https://milanote.com/guide/create-better-moodboards, www.creativebloq.com/graphic-design/mood-boards-812470

Coming up with ideas

This exercise might support teams in elaborating ideas and planning activities in more detail. The following questions could be helpful to structure an idea-finding workshop or team meeting:

- ☐ WHAT IS OUR IDEA? WHAT WOULD WE LIKE TO DO?
- ☐ WHAT DO WE NEED TO REALISE THE IDEA (E.G. MATERIAL, BUDGET)?
- ☐ WHO DO WE NEED FOR SUPPORT (E.G. COOPERATION PARTNERS, EXPERTS)?
- ☐ WHAT IS THE SUSTAINABLE EFFECT OF OUR ACTIVITY?

Depending on the group size, two procedures are possible: The questions could be discussed in the whole group and the facilitator notes the discussion points and results. Or participants work in small groups of 2–3 people and present their ideas to each other.

Material needed: To visualise the supporting questions, use a poster or a working sheet

TIPS & TRICKS: A nicely designed working sheet or poster might encourage the creative process.

THE DREAM FACTORY PEOPLE WITH WISHES

The approach

The Dream Factory – People with wishes method was developed by the Dutch project partner Stichting Bij de Tijd in cooperation with members of the *Sweet 70 & Rebel group* and *Modestraat Amsterdam-North*[1] as part of the *in***visible talents** project.

According to the overall objective of *in***visible talents**, *The Dream Factory* aims to stir up and make visible the 'giving power' of people of (very) old age. During a joint process (up to 10 meetings) and based on inspiring methods, a group of 8-10 (very) old people discover and share their wishes and dreams and help each other to fulfil them. Dreams may be lifelong cherished but unfulfilled wishes as well as dreams that arose not so long ago as a result of an event. Within *The Dream Factory* approach, these dreams are named "threshold wishes": You want something, but you have to cross a threshold to get it done and you cannot do it alone. Examples of wishes discussed are:

- ...I WANT TO TIDY UP MY HOUSE BUT CAN'T GET AROUND TO IT.
- ...I WANT TO START A VEGETABLE GARDEN, BUT NOT ON MY OWN.
- ...I WANT TO GO OUTSIDE MORE OFTEN, BUT I DON'T FEEL SAFE ON THE STREET.

Every participant is invited to bring in his/her dream(s). The aim of *Dream Factory* meetings is to nudge sustainable mutual support for realising dreams. All participants are encouraged to bring in their talents, knowledge, skills, networks, etc. Some dreams can directly become reality. Others may require editing. For example, "I want to go to the moon again", could become: "I will go again in a helicopter over Veluwe national park". "I would like to find someone to love" could become: "I want to get to know someone in the neighbourhood who I will take nice walks with."

Besides facilitators, the process is supported by a team of 'enablers'. Enablers (e.g. students, older volunteers, etc.) commit to the group as constant companions. They contribute to group discussions, give individual tips and provide aftercare after the group meetings. If needed, they also act as temporary buddies to support participants in realising their wishes.

In the following chapter we would like to share some of the tools used in the whole *Dream Factory* process. Please be aware that *The Dream Factory* approach is much more than single tools. In fact it is a complex process to support (older) participants in finding out about their dreams and realising them. However, we would like to invite you to try some of the tools and encourage your staff, volunteers and/or older participants to start an initial reflection on their dreams and wishes.

1 *Modestraat Amsterdam-North* is a community centre and cultural breeding place that wants to make the life of people more colourful and make dreams come true. For more information have a look at: www.broedstraten.nl/modestraat/overig/projecten (Dutch)

Selection of Tools

Values game

The aim of the *values game* is to become familiar with the question: Who are you and what do you find important in your current life?

In other words: What are you going for? The *values game* might be an appropriate first exercise in expressing personal motives and wishes.

Cards with one value each, such as love, money, power, caring, contacts, etc. are spread out on the table. Each participant chooses some values and explains them in a subgroup. A priority list is then made of the three most important shared values for each group. The groups present their findings at the plenary closing. In doing so, we also consider the significance and importance of differences in patterns of values in a pluralistic and democratic society. This game also strengthens the foundation of mutual trust, which is a requirement for sharing very personal thoughts and perspectives.

Material needed: Cards with values. Different lists of core values can be found on the internet

Quality Relay

The *Quality Relay* has been designed to visualise people's qualities of character.

Participants sit at a round table, each with an empty A3 sheet. In the centre of the table are quality cards for inspiration with qualities such as "helpful", "handy", "smart", "listening", and so on. Each participant draws a "self-portrait" in the middle of the sheet. Around it each draws or writes one or a few qualities he/she owns. When everyone is ready, everyone turns the self-portrait clockwise to the person sitting on the left side. The neighbour adds qualities as known from the person portrayed. This is repeated until the qualities' portrait returns to the original owner. All portraits are hung in a quality gallery, which the group looks at extensively and can be discussed in pairs. The positive effect is amazing.

Material needed: Cards with different qualities of character. For lists of characters please have a look on the internet.

Fruit Basket

The *Fruit Basket* is an assignment in which the participant imagines life as a fruit basket. In time, the basket becomes emptier, but also requires a change. There is usually a rotten apple in everyone's fruit basket. The conversation is about the rotten apple that everyone wants to remove. This conversation is not easy for everyone. But with good guidance it offers participants a feeling of peace and relief. Social cohesion in the group may get a huge boost.

Material needed: A basket full of fruit for demonstration purposes (or a picture).

TIPS & TRICKS: Participants can also be invited to draw their own *Fruit Basket*, identifying fresh and inspiring "fruits" in their lives and also the "rotten apple".

Philosopher’s Stone

In the Philosopher's Stone the parting of ‘what gets in the way’ is materialised. Each participant receives (or brings) a stone found in nature and paints it (with natural dyes such as crayons and pencil) with a word or image that represents what one wants to say goodbye to. “I don’t want this anymore...” is a useful help phrase.

While people are actively and creatively engaged in this, the conversation continues in an informal manner. Exploring what you no longer want, remove ballast, makes one go deeper. Unpleasant memories may come up, but also beautiful stories. The painted stones are collected and taken on a group outing to a location in nature, preferably on or near the water. In turn, the participants throw their stone over the shoulder into the water.
If desired with a very short oral explanation.
This ritual makes a deep impression. It is a true experience for the participants. *The Dream Factory* meeting was combined with a trip to a nearby nature park and a lunch in a traditional Dutch pancake restaurant in the park.

Material needed: Stones, crayons, pencils

Tile Wisdoms & House of Identity

The conversation about everyone's *House of Identity* is an important step towards formulating wishes and dreams. The *House of Identity* depicts a five-room house. Each room represents a specific area of life: body & mind, social contacts, material situation, work & activities/participation and values & inspiration (see annex).

A good way to prepare participants for the *House of Identity* in a relaxed way is the exercise *Tile wisdom* (folk wisdom).

After a brief explanation of the *House of Identity* (which each participant gets handed on paper), participants are invited to collect traditional sayings and aphorisms about the different areas of the *House of Identity* and write it on (photocopied) tiles. This idea is based on Dutch "tegelspreuken", tiles inscribed with traditional sayings or wisdoms, often in blue-and-white pottery (Delftware style), used as decorative wall-hangings. If it is not familiar to participants in your country, sayings and aphorisms could also be collected on cards. All tiles or cards are hung on the wall. Participants wander around and have a look at the "tile wisdoms" they collected. This activity is a good ice-breaker for a conversation on different perspectives on life.
In the next step, participants explore their own *House of Identity*. They walk through the rooms and answer questions such as: In which room do you feel strong and pleasant? In which room do you experience your vulnerability? Which room do you want to redecorate? Which not (anymore)?

Material needed: Image of *House of Identity* (see annex), cards or photocopied tiles.

TIPS & TRICKS: Experience shows that this exercise supports people in formulating their dreams and wishes. However, moderators might also ask participants about their dreams (e.g. Is this perhaps a dream you want to bring in?) or refer to statements participants have made before.

Dream Clouds

To encourage a discussion about dreams and wishes, moderators create *dream clouds* with short texts, sometimes a single word and hang them on the wall. The texts could be ideas of the moderators or representation of dreams and wishes that participants themselves verbally suggested in the previous meeting.

There are also empty clouds on the table for those who still want to write down another dream. Participants are invited to take the dream of the wall that best suits their own situation. They add a few more words, mostly for explanation, sometimes with a question mark.

All participants take the time to look at the collection of *dream clouds*, to reflect, to ask each other questions based on the words in and around the dream cloud. The moderators also invite the participants to already think about the dreams of others. Are there common dreams to go around with together? Are there any dreams where you could lend a hand to bring the dreamer closer to their goal?

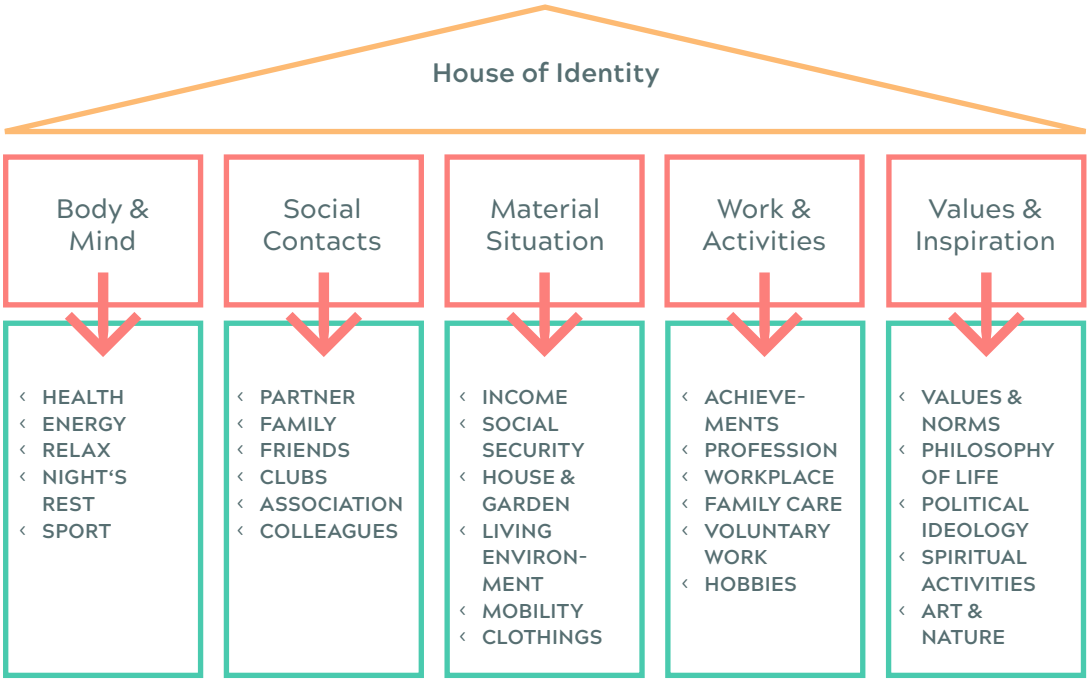
Material needed: Paper, *dream clouds* prepared in advance

TIPS & TRICKS: If you are working with a group of people for the first time, it might be helpful to ask them about initial ideas of dreams and wishes in advance. Based on this "short survey", some examples of *dream clouds* can be prepared. To give an idea of possible dreams, here are some examples collected during *Dream Factory* meetings in the Netherlands:

- "I WOULD LIKE TO BE APPRECIATED MORE."
- "LIFE IN MY BLOCK OF FLATS IS SO ANONYMOUS. I WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO JUST SAY HELLO AGAIN."
- "I WOULD LIKE TO START A DINING GROUP AND I WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF A COOKING GROUP TOO."
- "I WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO BECOME ACTIVE AND TAKE PART IN ACTIVITIES MORE; MANY PEOPLE ARE SO PASSIVE."
- "I WOULD LIKE MORE CONTACTS, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW."
- "I WOULD LIKE TO GO ON A HOLIDAY"

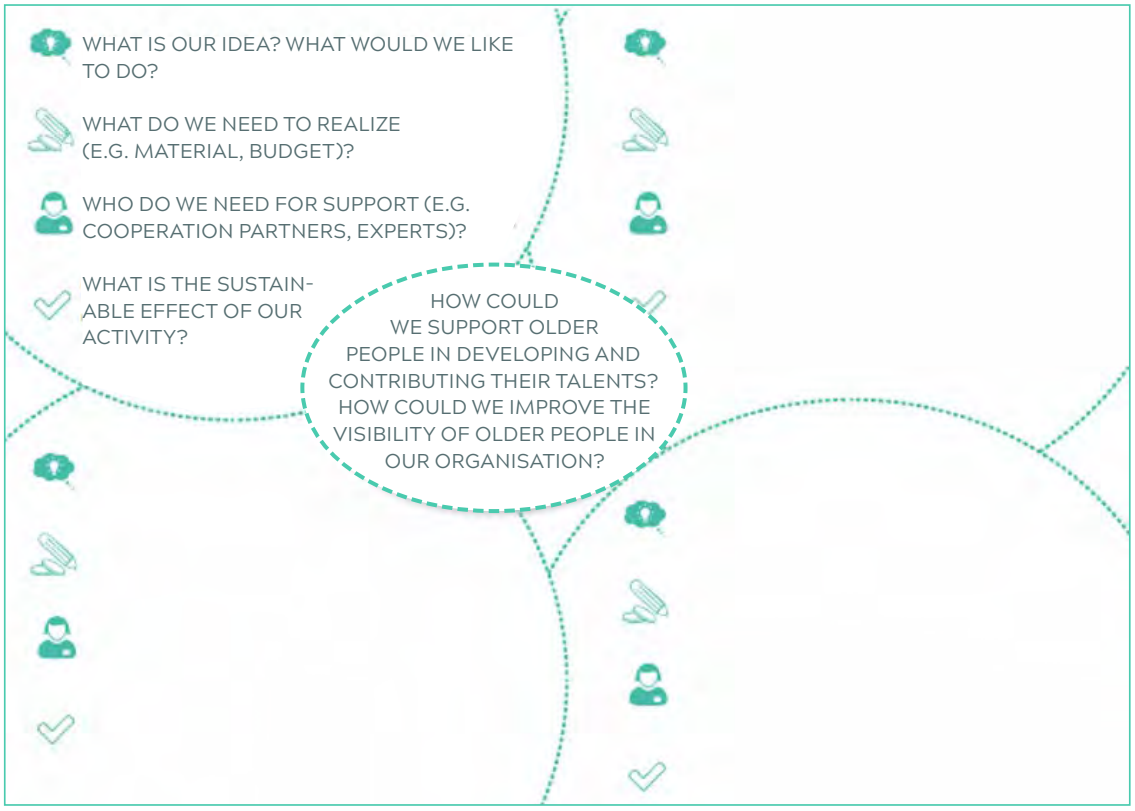
ANNEX

House of Identity



Source Figure based on *Huis van de Identiteit*, Houben, P. (2009). Interactief levensloopbeleid. Amsterdam: SWP.

Coming up with ideas



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