

# Reframing Ageing in Australia



**Ageism against older people is stereotyping, discrimination and mistreatment based solely upon age. It has a profound impact on our job prospects, confidence, health, quality of life and control over life decisions.**

Language is important in shaping our views and perspectives. How we convey information, also referred to as 'framing', can have as much of an impact as the actual information itself.

The words we hear and use about being and getting old can have a big impact on whether we hold ageist attitudes and beliefs. Considered use of language can help us address ageism in Australian society.

The Reframing Ageing in Australia study has shown that the following frames can be helpful in changing our perceptions about older people, including those we hold ourselves. They can help breakdown ageist attitudes and beliefs that drive ageist behaviour.

These Frames...	...help break down these attitudes
Look at people for who they are, not their age <i>(Diversity and Human rights frame)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Older people are all the same (an homogeneous group)</li><li>• Age is an acceptable reason to treat older people differently</li><li>• We have to struggle against our own ageing (the anti-ageing movement)</li></ul>
Empower yourself and others to be our true self at every age <i>(Empowerment and support frame)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Older adults are helpless</li><li>• Age is a barrier</li><li>• You have to become a stereotype of ageing (it's inevitable)</li></ul>
Older adults contribute to society <i>(Value frame)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Productivity only valuable as paid labour</li><li>• Older adults are a burden on society</li></ul>
We all engage in lifelong learning as teachers and learners <i>(Education frame)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can't teach an old dog new tricks</li><li>• Older adults can't learn technology</li><li>• Older adults are a burden</li></ul>
Ageism affects people at all ages; we are in it together <i>(Intergenerational frame)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ageism is only an issue for older adults</li><li>• Intergenerational conflict is inevitable</li></ul>

These are the findings of the Reframing Ageing in Australia study, a joint project between the University of Sydney and the EveryAGE Counts campaign. This work will be used by the EveryAGE Counts campaign to produce materials and training resources to help us all address ageism in Australia.

**You can read more about the Reframing Ageing in Australia study at: [www.everyagecounts.org.au/research](http://www.everyagecounts.org.au/research)**

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[www.everyagecounts.org.au](http://www.everyagecounts.org.au)