

Want to change people's minds about aging? Jeanette Leardi can help you.



Jeanette Leardi, M.A., is a writer, editor, and community educator with a passion for elder empowerment. An older adult herself and a former family caregiver for 17 years, she has experienced ageism as well as the rich assets of growing older. Through her public speaking and writing, her goal is to share with others the powerful lessons she has learned and the strategies she has developed for embracing aging as a vital strategy for a fulfilling life.

Jeanette's mission to tell the truth about aging — that it's a natural process that should be embraced and celebrated — involves giving popular presentations and classes in journaling, memoir writing, ethical wills, brain fitness, ageism, creativity, caregiver support, and intergenerational communication to people of all ages.

The creator of the *Ageful Living* blog, Jeanette's publishing experiences include staff positions at *Newsweek*, *Life*, *People*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, and *Sesame Street* magazines and *The Charlotte Observer*. She has a Master's Degree with Honors in English from Rutgers University and a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. You can learn more about her work at www.jeanetteleardi.com.





Presentations on Aging and Ageism

What's Age Got to Do with It? Busting the Myths About Getting Older

It's a fact of life that no matter who you are, you're aging. But do you really know what aging means? Is becoming older something to fear and dread, or does it lead to surprising benefits not possible to enjoy at younger ages?

This engaging presentation will help you discover what aging is — and what it isn't. Drawing from the latest scientific research, it busts social myths and negative stereotypes about older adults and offers practical tips for disrupting the ageism that keeps people of all generations from fully contributing to society.

Disrupting Ageism: Turning Awareness into Action

Ageism is often described as “the last acceptable prejudice of society” and ironically, the one to which everyone is susceptible because aging is a natural and inevitable process of life. The first step in eliminating ageist attitudes and behavior is to be aware of them. This awareness must give rise to action, if ageism is to be disrupted.

In this presentation, you'll analyze ageist situations and come up with effective strategies for neutralizing prejudicial perceptions as well as bigoted language and behaviors, which you can then apply to experiences you may encounter in the future.

In Other Words: Transforming the Language of Ageism

Honoring the aging process as not only a moral good but as a public necessity. The success of any program, product, or service targeting older adults depends on dispelling the many unproductive myths and stereotypes that have defined getting older solely in terms of deficit and decline rather than as the socioeconomic asset it can be.

In this presentation, you'll discover how ageist language supports those myths and stereotypes as well as learn practical strategies for helping others recognize and transform ageist language into a truer expression of the older adult experience.





Presentations on Brain Fitness

It's All in Your Mind! How to Keep Your Brain Fit and Strong

“Why am I not as sharp as I used to be?” “Does aging really mean having a slower, less efficient brain?” “Will I someday develop Alzheimer’s disease or other form of dementia?” For many middle-age and older adults, these are real concerns, but there are things you can do to keep yourself as mentally fit as possible in the years to come.

In this insightful and entertaining presentation, you’ll learn surprising, good-news facts about the aging brain and how to care for it, plus fundamental lifestyle tips based on the latest medical and psychological research to maintain and maximize your brain power.

“Now, What Was I Thinking?” How to Boost Your Memory

Do you feel that you are forgetting more things on a regular basis? And are you worried that this might be a symptom of Alzheimer’s disease or some other form of dementia?

This engaging presentation based on the latest neuroscientific research reveals the surprising ways in which your memory works and about the different kinds of memory processed by the human brain. You’ll also learn various strategies for maintaining — and boosting — your brain’s capacity to remember.

Stars Invisible by Day: Fascinating Truths About Creativity and the Older Brain

What is creativity all about? Is it a skill that remains the same for every generation, or does its nature change as we age? As you age, might you be in danger of losing your creative powers, or can you actually increase them with the passing of time? And if so, how?

This presentation, based on the latest neuroscientific research, describes fascinating truths about creativity by offering examples of its forms and styles and explaining what happens in the brain during the processes of inspiration and invention. It also discusses the productive advantages of the older adult brain and provides tips for maintaining and increasing your powers of imagination.





What Others Are Saying...

“Jeanette Leardi combines laser-sharp social analysis with an accessible voice, a rare skill that makes her voice an important one in the emerging social movement to end ageism....I recently had opportunity to co-facilitate two conference workshops with her on ways to recognize and disrupt ageism....I’d happily work with her again, in any kind of setting, and heartily recommend her to any organization or business in search of an exceptionally smart and competent speaker or trainer.”

— **Ashton Applewhite**
Principal at This Chair Rocks

“Jeanette has the ability to take challenging or abstract concepts and make them understandable and applicable, always with respect for her audience. Her presentation style is engaging, natural, and confident.”

— **Jessica McLaren**
Program Coordinator, AARP Experience Corps, Metropolitan Family Service

“Jeanette Leardi is an exceptional instructor who inspires her audience and helps them embrace new opportunities to learn, grow, and develop....Her facilitation is warm, engaging, thought-provoking, and positive. Her presentations are clear, consistent, and enthusiastic. Jeanette is passionate about lifelong learning. That passion transcends all of her work and inspires us to live our lives as an expression of our values. Thank you, Jeanette!”

— **Steve Higgs**
Executive Director, Senior Advocates for Generational Equity

“Looking for a multi-talented speaker, author, and teacher? Jeanette Leardi fits the bill. Her presentation on creativity and the older brain engaged the audience, caused people to think, and succeeded in ‘busting’ many of the myths and negative stereotypes about aging. Jeanette is a pleasure to work with. She listens carefully to the parameters of any project or presentation in which she is involved. She’s easygoing and smart. I recommend her without reservation.”

— **Katherine Foldes**
author, *Family Meeting Handbook*





“I want to thank Jeanette profusely for speaking with our seniors about the myths about aging. She gave one of the best talks we’ve ever had. As someone who has studied aging on a graduate level and managed programming for seniors for a decade, I thought I knew it all, but I learned so much from her. She did a fantastic job keeping our audience engaged, and everyone commented on what an enlightening talk she gave and how great of a speaker she was. We hope to have her back very soon.”

— **Ilana Seidman**

Program Coordinator, Department of Senior Services, Newton, Massachusetts

“Jeanette’s presentation on Creativity and the Older Brain was engaging and insightful. She conveyed a great deal of technical information, but it was easy to follow, and she made it immediately useful through on-the-spot practice. I found myself talking about what I had learned with friends and family and using and sharing the techniques she demonstrated. I recommend Jeanette Leardi for your next conference, lecture, or team training.”

— **Rebecca Miller**

Planning and Development Specialist, Multnomah County (Oregon) Aging, Disability & Veteran Services Division

“As someone who has experienced Jeanette Leardi’s instructional approach at a recent AARP conference, I can state that she is a thoroughly engaging teacher with the remarkable ability to assess and address her clients’ needs. Her skills as a researcher and instructor allow her to create informative, entertaining workshops.... My coworkers and I not only learned a great deal from her presentation, but we also used what we learned to help guide our planning discussions concerning future needs. I highly recommend Ms. Leardi for any organization or business seeking to benefit from her extensive knowledge and interests.”

— **Thomas Goodwin**

Project Director, AARP Foundation

“Jeanette is a presenter extraordinaire! She covers relevant topics with such skill and knowledge of her subject matter as she thoroughly engages the audience.... Her research-based information comes alive with examples, personal experiences, and fun brain breaks.... Yes, Jeanette is a pro!”

— **Kathe Fradkin**

Retired Instructor in the Portland State University School of Business and a Founding Member of Viva Village





A Partial List of Clients

As a public speaker and community educator, Jeanette has been privileged to serve the needs of a variety of clients. These include local government agencies, public library systems, educational institutions, health care organizations, senior centers, and retirement communities devoted to the issues and needs of older adults. Her clients' goals become her own as she develops custom presentations that inform and engage their audiences.

AARP Foundation (Washington D.C.)
AARP Oregon
Acts Retirement – Life Communities
Brookdale Senior Living
Carolinas Healthcare System — Charlotte Medical Center
Carolinas Healthcare System — Area Health Education Center
Centralina Area Agency on Aging — Charlotte, N.C.
Holiday Retirement
Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region
Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest
Jenks Center (Winchester, Mass.)
Juanita Pohl Recreation Center (Beaverton, Ore.)
LeadingAge Oregon
Metropolitan Family Service (Portland, Ore.)
Multnomah County (Ore.) — Aging, Disability & Veterans Services Division
Multnomah County (Ore.) Public Library
National University of Natural Medicine
Newton (Mass.) Senior Center
North Shore (Ill.) Senior Center
Oregon Recreation and Parks Association
Portland Community College
Public Health Institute
Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County
Queens University at Charlotte — Continuing Education
Senior Advocates for Generational Equity
Washington County (Ore.) — Disability, Aging, and Veteran Services
Wellesley (Mass.) Council on Aging





To learn more about
Jeanette Leardi's presentations,
workshops, blog posts,
and media articles and appearances,
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