Aging Resource Guide

Personas & Trends

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OF CINCINNATI

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Introduction

What is the Aging Resource Guide?

Welcome to the **Aging Resource Guide**. This resource will help you use design thinking methodologies to empathize with older adults, strategize for the future, and address some of the most pressing problems that Cincinnati's Jewish older adults face today.

In this guide you will find:

- A look into the future of aging in Cincinnati with trend forecasting
- Empathizing with older adults and caregivers through personas
- Resources to help generate ideas and collaborate

Who created the Aging Resource Guide?

The Aging Resource Guide was created through collaboration between the Live Well Collaborative and the Jewish Home of Cincinnati. This guide is a resource for the community, informed by primary and secondary research conducted by the Live Well Collaborative (special thanks to our medical advisors Dr. Irene Hamrick and Dr. Rhonna Shatz for reviewing the content in this guide).

What is the Jewish Home of Cincinnati?

The Jewish Home of Cincinnati is a grantmaking organization dedicated to caring for local Jewish older adults, honoring their past, and supporting future generations. They are committed to learning about and advocating for our older adults' needs by investing in innovative programs and services.

What is the Live Well Collaborative?

The Live Well Collaborative is a nonprofit (501 c-6) founded in 2007 by the University of Cincinnati and P&G. Its purpose is to develop products, services and system solutions for living well across the life span with an expertise in the 50+ marketplace. It is a unique academic-industry driven innovation center where expertly selected interdisciplinary teams of UC faculty and students use a design thinking approach to translate user centered research into products and services.

Why an Aging Resource Guide?

This educational resource was developed as a reflection of the Jewish Home of Cincinnati's dedication to investing in and impacting the lives of Cincinnati's Jewish older adults.

By highlighting several national and global trends of aging, outlining the factors unique to Cincinnati's Jewish community, and responding to direct feedback collected from our diverse and vibrant local community, we hope to better support Jewish older adults, caregivers, and those providing impactful services to this population.

What Are Personas?

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What are personas?

Definition

- Personas are research-based, fictional characters, which **represent the different types of people** that might use your service, product, site, or brand in a similar way.
- Creating personas helps you understand your users' needs, experiences, behaviors and goals.
- Personas help humanize trends and build empathy.

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Why does it matter?

The Advantage

- Personas reflect insights gained from research and result from patterns and trends that emerge from that research.
- Personas represent condensed information from real user interviews and **provide insight into the primary concerns and interests of users**.

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Getting to Know Our Community

Caregiver Personas

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Getting to Know Our Community

Young Caregiver

Story:

Lucy is a full-time college student pursuing her degree in computer science. She lives at home with her mother to save on rent and other expenses and to help lessen her student debt.

Because she lives at home she sees just how much work her mother does to care of her grandparents, such as running errands, providing transport, and managing appointments. When her mom is too busy with her part-time job, Lucy ends up taking over those tasks to help out.

She is trying to teach her grandparents how to use some technology like MyChart to lessen the burden but they find it very difficult. Now that she is starting her own part-time job, she's not sure who's going to help when everyone is too busy.

Name	Age
Lucy	24

Concerned Grandkid

Key Highlights:

- Full-time college student
- Burdened by student debt
- Helps take care of her grandparents

Other Factors:

Financial Difficulty **Stress**

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How can we help Lucy?

You can use the following prompts to help **ideate** on ways to address some of Lucy's problems:

Key Challenges:

Lucy's family struggles with finding **consistent care** for their aging loved ones.

Lucy wants to **integrate more technology** into the care of her grandparents but doesn't know how to encourage or teach them to use it.

Lucy's family **struggles financially** and cannot afford to hire a caretaker.

Questions to Consider:

- What support can we offer Lucy that will not create additional financial strain for her family?
- Are there new or innovative technologies that could help Lucy or her grandparents?
- Why are her grandparents struggling to adopt new technology? How can we help?
- Are there other solutions that Lucy might not know about?

Getting to Know Our Community

Sandwiched Caregiver

Story:

Diana is a stressed-out mom juggling her part-time job at the bank, raising two children, and trying to take care of her husband's father. Although her husband is Jewish, Diana is not, and sometimes she struggles with cultural differences.

She has trouble providing care for her husband's father, who suffers from memory loss and frequently forgets who she is. He can be very resistant to her care. Her husband is often away for work so these tasks fall to her. Luckily, they can afford to have a health aide come a few times a week, but that can also be disorienting to her father-in-law.

Diana wants her children to be able to spend time with him but worries about the disconnect they might feel, and how that might impact their mental health.

Name	Age
Diana	52

"Sandwiched" Mom

Key Highlights:

- Raising two teenagers
- Intermarried, non-Jewish
- Primary caretaker of her father-in-law

Other Factors:

- Intermarriage
- Stress

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How can we help Diana?

You can use the following prompts to help **ideate** on ways to address some of Diana's problems:

Key Challenges:

Diana's father-in-law has memory loss and **she struggles to provide care** for him when he cannot remember who she is.

Diana is not Jewish and does not know how to help her father-in-law **connect with his faith**.

Diana struggles to manage her time and **feels very overwhelmed** by caring for her family.

Questions to Consider:

- What respite or support could we provide Diana when she is feeling overwhelmed?
- How can we create spaces for non-Jewish caretakers to learn about Judaism and how that may impact care?
- What support can we provide for seniors who have memory loss?

Getting to Know Our Community

Partner Caregiver

Story:

Joel is the primary caretaker for his wife, Miriam. She relies on him to manage most of their finances, use technology, make appointments, etc. As they've aged, Miriam wants to become more connected with her faith and Joel wants to be supportive. He has been going to synagogue with her and reconnecting with his faith as well.

He worries about his health, and what his passing away might mean for his wife, who relies on him greatly. Their children live in other states and have young children they need to take care of, so he doesn't want to rely on them.

He has been managing his heart condition to the best of his ability, but he is very worried about getting sicker and becoming a burden on Miriam.

Name	Age
Joel	87

Always-There Husband

Key Highlights:

- Primary caretaker of wife
- Retired older adult
- Reconnecting with faith

Other Factors:

- Heart Disease
- Stress

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How can we help Joel?

You can use the following prompts to help **ideate** on ways to address some of Joel's problems:

Key Challenges:

Joel is concerned with his health and **doesn't know what would happen** if he is unable to care for his wife.

Joel wants to become more **connected with his Judaism** and wants to find a faith-based community of other older adults.

Joel **doesn't consider himself a caretaker;** he's just doing his job as a husband.

Questions to Consider:

- How can we help prepare Joel and Miriam for a scenario in which Joel is unable to continue his role as primary caretaker?
- What resources can we provide for Joel to reconnect with his faith and find a community of like-minded older adults?
- How can we provide support for Joel if he isn't actively looking for caregiver resources?

Older Adult Personas

Getting to Know Our Community

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Getting to Know Our Community

Active Advocate

Name	Age
Esther	68

Active Advocate

Story:

Esther worked in healthcare before retiring and knows how important it is to remain active, to exercise, and eat nutritious food as she ages.

She keeps to a weekly workout routine and has seen more improvement with her arthritis than some of her counterparts. She wants to spend her retirement helping other older adults in her community age well and live healthier longer.

That's why she helps to run several programs at the Jewish Community Center for older adults. Helping others gives her purpose and keeps her busy.

Key Highlights:

- Finds meaning in helping others
- Volunteer work in retirement
- Commutes via public transportation

Other Factors:

- Arthritis

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How can we help Esther?

You can use the following prompts to help **ideate** on ways to address some of Esther's problems:

Key Challenges:

Esther is **living alone** and does not have support if her health were to start declining.

Esther **does not own a car** and commutes primarily via public transportation and ride services.

Questions to Consider:

- How can we help Esther to live at home and remain independent as long as possible?
- How can we help Esther come up with a plan in case she needs more support later in life?
- What services/support can we offer Esther to help with her transportation needs?

Getting to Know Our Community

Depressed Zaydee

Story:

Harold thought he would never retire. He loves his job working in the kitchen, making food. But now that his diabetes has gotten worse, his children don't think he should be working in the restaurant anymore.

Working was Harold's main focus, and now that he doesn't work, he feels lost. He has been spending a lot of time with his grandchildren, babysitting while their parents are at work. They are the light of his life, but he still feels disconnected and depressed.

In order to get back in the kitchen, he needs to improve his health. While his wife is supportive, she has not changed her diet or lifestyle habits like he has had to, which has been difficult for him. He is very frustrated to have to rely on others.

Name	Age
Harold	79

Depressed Zaydee

Key Highlights:

- Veteran
- Cannot work due to health issues
- Loss of meaning without work

Other Factors:

- Diabetes
- Depression

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How can we help Harold?

You can use the following prompts to help **ideate** on ways to address some of Harold's problems:

Key Challenges:

Harold struggles with **depression**, which has worsened now that he has left his job.

Harold did not want to retire, and without working, he has experienced a **loss of meaning** in his life.

Harold is **frustrated** with his new diet and lifestyle changes as he manages his diabetes and **lacks support** from his family.

Questions to Consider:

- How can we help Harold find new meaningful activities or work that can bring new purpose to his life?
- How can we support Harold with the lifestyle changes that are necessary for his health?
- How can we support older adults who struggle with mental health issues?
- How can we help Harold communicate his frustrations and struggles with his support network?

Getting to Know Our Community

Reluctant Recluse

Story:

After her husband passed away, Sarah moved to Cincinnati to be closer to her adult son, but hasn't found a strong connection to the community yet. While she is religiously observant, her son is not, and he can't help connect her to the local orthodox community.

Managing her osteoporosis has escalated her feelings of being incapable and isolated. She has trouble getting around and feels like she is trapped in her home. Because her son is busy with work and she has no daughter-in-law, she doesn't know who to ask for help.

A neighbor has been stopping by recently to chat with her about the synagogues nearby and offer some advice on her feelings of isolation. Although she appreciates the sentiment, she can't help feeling spied on by a stranger.

Name	Age
Sarah	73

Reluctant Recluse

Key Highlights:

- Lack of connections, isolated
- No grandchildren, single son
- Relied on spouse, is now widowed

Other Factors:

- Osteoporosis
- Socially Isolated
- Mobility Issue

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How can we help Sarah?

You can use the following prompts to help **ideate** on ways to address some of Sarah's problems:

Key Challenges:

Sarah is very **isolated**, with no connections to her new community after moving.

Sarah feels like she **cannot ask for help**, and doesn't want to rely on strangers.

Sarah is new to Cincinnati and wants to find a **new synagogue** and faith group.

Questions to Consider:

- How can we help Sarah to build connections with her new community and create a support network?
- How can we encourage Sarah to ask for help and provide her with the resources she needs?
- How can we connect Sarah with her local faith groups & leaders?
- How can we help Sarah come up with a plan in case she needs more support living alone?

The Future of Aging: Trend Forecasting

Trend Category: Social Connectivity

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Social Connectivity

According to an advisory report released by US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy (May 2023), social isolation and loneliness in seniors can lead to adverse effects such as pain, insomnia, depression, anxiety and reduced life expectancy. In people of all ages, loneliness is associated with higher risks of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, addiction, suicidality and self-harm, and dementia. "Social connection is as essential to humanity as food, water or shelter," the advisory says.

Source: https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/02/health/murthy-loneliness-isolation/index.html

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Social Connectivity Current and Future State

At A Glance:

- **Social isolation** remains one of the most impactful factors in an older adult's health. Maintaining an **active social life is imperative** for mental and physical health.
- Those facing health issues such as hearing or vision impairments may experience **fear of stigma** and may therefore **avoid social settings**.
- Older adults and their family members may struggle to connect and avoid conflict as viewpoints become even more **polarized**.
- **Shared older adult spaces** promise improved older adult interconnectivity but **aren't available** to most older adults.
- **Technology** proves difficult for older adults to **understand and trust,** especially with the rise of scams targeting older adults.

Trend Category: Familial Structure

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Familial Structure

As life expectancy increases, the dynamic within familial relationships shifts. These changes directly affect older adults' and caregivers' lifestyles.

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Familial Structure

Micro Trends: **What does this actually look like?**

- **Aging in Place: Staying in Your Home as You Age**
- **Intergenerational Disconnect: Communication Difficulties Between Different Generations**
- **Strain on Sandwich Generation To Take Care of Parents and Children**
- **Strain on Family Caregivers**
- **Familial Polarization Due to Diverging Perspectives**

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Familial Structure Current and Future State

At A Glance:

- **Advancements** in the medical field have **lengthened** the average **life expectancy**.
- This increase in life expectancy has changed the family dynamics by increasing the number of **family members** who have become caregivers and the ages during which they **are caregiving**.
- The concept of the **'sandwich generation'** has emerged, as caregivers who are having children later in life are now raising their children while they are taking care of their parents.
- Senior **living facilities** are **filling up** as the Boomer Generation ages, and more older adults are choosing to **'age in place'**.

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Trend Category: Health and Wellbeing

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Health and Wellbeing

The need for leveled and personalized care has come into focus. Empowering individuals to make small lifestyle changes can improve the overall health and decrease the burden on caregivers.

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Health and Wellbeing

Micro Trends: **What does this actually look like?**

- **Older Adult Voting Patterns Are Health Focused**
- **Living Healthy Longer**
- **Improvements in Leveled Care and Opportunities to Customize Your Healthcare Experience**
- **Non-familial Caregiver Burnout**
- **Shifts from Community Living to Aging in Place**
- **Improvements in Older Adult Home Design**

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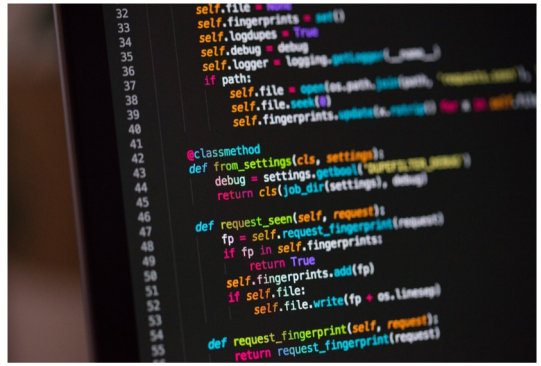
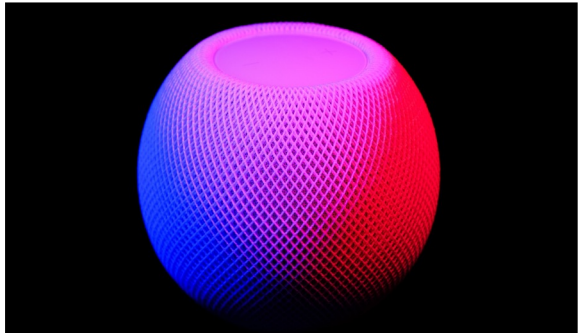
Health and Wellbeing Current and Future State

At A Glance:

- With the increased life expectancy, doctors and specialists are finding that **personalized care** with an emphasis on **living healthy longer** allows older adults to age with a **higher quality of life**.
- New technology such as smart watches and **improved consumer health products** such as hearing aids have improved leveled and customizable care.
- Further improving the health of older adults will be necessary for **decreasing** the **burden** on caregivers and improving overall quality of life.
- The **voting patterns** of older adults reflect an interest in **improving** the overall quality of available **healthcare**.

Trend Category: Technology Aid





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Technology Aid

Technology can improve the health and quality of life of older adults if we can tackle current issues of accessibility, poor design, adaptability, and understanding.

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Technology Aid Current and Future State

At A Glance:

- As technology is further **integrated** into society, **adaptability** and **accessibility** will need to improve to accommodate older adults.
- Improving the quality of **user experience design** for older adults will become an important focus.
- Technology will further be implemented into the older adults' lives in the form of **assistive health products** such as smart speakers.
- Preparing for this shift will require an increase in **educational support systems** for older adults.

Trend Category: Economic Factors

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Economic Factors

Disruptions and weak points within our supply chain (exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic), and economic instability have caused supply and demand issues that uniquely impact older adults.

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Economic Factors

- Cost of Living is Increasing/Inflation
- Supply Chain Fragility and Shortages
- Lack of Older Adult Transportation
- Food Insecurity
- High Cost of Medicine
- Inadequate Facility Capacity for Older Adult Homes

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Economic Factors: Current and Future State

At A Glance:

- Economic instability and disruptions in the supply chain have made it more difficult for older adults to **provide for their basic needs**.
- As the Boomer Generation ages, finding **available and affordable housing** will be increasingly difficult.
- Despite the Boomer Generations comparative financial success, **food insecurity** and the **high cost of medicine** will remain an issue for older adults.
- As the size of the older adult population increases, services such as **transportation**, **healthcare capacity,** and **community assisted living** will struggle to keep up with the high demand.

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Using A Trend Forecast

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Using the Trend Forecasts Effectively

Now that you have reviewed the forecast, you can take this information and combine it with your unique insights and ideas.

To best use the forecast, you may want to keep the following questions in mind:

- How can using this information influence a positive change?
- How can I use this information to better prepare for the future?
- How do these trends inform my community's specific needs?
- Are there any existing services or providers that I might network with?
- How might this further inform my project creation?
- How might this allow me to create a persuasive grant proposal to fund an impactful project?

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A Note To Readers

Now equipped with the information to further empathize with older adults, gather resources and ideate a better future, we invite you to take these ideas forward and address the most pressing needs of our Jewish Older Adults in Cincinnati.

Thank You