



### **The Program**

As we retire from the work force, not only our body is at risk of a sedentary lifestyle. However, only the physical body (weight, muscle mass, skeletal integrity) has been addressed and monitored-until now. Recent medical and scientific discoveries support that the mental, social, spiritual and emotional life of someone retired and aging also needs as much attention and focus.

Relying on the Integral Theory metric by Ken Wilbur, Expressive Avenues: Wellness closes the existing gap in wellness care for those 65 years old and older. The training program titled Learning H.O.W. to Age™ is supported by fMRI brain mapping results illustrated in Mapping the Mind by Rita Carter and references Abraham Maslow, Edward de Bono, Moshe Feldenkrais and Dr. Richard Restak. Expressive Avenues: Wellness incorporates all 4 quadrants of experience: interior (somatosensory awareness), exterior (necessary versus habitual movement), individual and collective. Learning H.O.W. to Age™ was developed in response to the growing population of retirees, the escalating costs of medical care and the general decline in quality of life seen in this population. Encouraging a proactive approach to the challenges we all face as we age, Learning H.O.W. to Age™ provides the tools and skills needed to move this population into this stage of life with optimism and energy. The scientific and medical community now supports the continued development of these skills as crucial to a successful retirement free of anxiety, illness, and social isolation. Through advances in brain mapping, scientists have shown a link between increased brain activity and many of the activities found in Learning H.O.W. to Age™. Preventing age related issues such as loss of balance, social interaction and critical decision making may be a matter of encouraging the release of neurotransmitters associated with these skills.

As our physical body ages the market has responded with many physical fitness programs. Keeping the whole person engaged and fit is the goal of Expressive Avenues. Joining these particular acting and movement exercises with accepted therapeutic outcomes offers participants the promise of vibrant living throughout a lifetime. Expressive Avenues: Wellness focuses on three areas: mental flexibility, physical perception, somatosensory awareness and is rooted in documented scientific studies.

### **The Training**

Expressive Avenues trains staff to teach, facilitate and document participants progress using Learning H.O.W. to Age™, a training manual developed specifically for our approach to Wellness. In addition to the manual, the first ten participant books, a resource list and assessment tools are included.

Previous knowledge is not required; however, staff should be comfortable working in an experiential program. Outside reading will be necessary before training begins as well as throughout the training and implementation. Exercises are most effective when offered in small groups and pairs. For that reason training class size is limited to 10.

\$800.00- 2/8 hour days with 4-6 hours of outside reading

Class size cap-20

## The Results

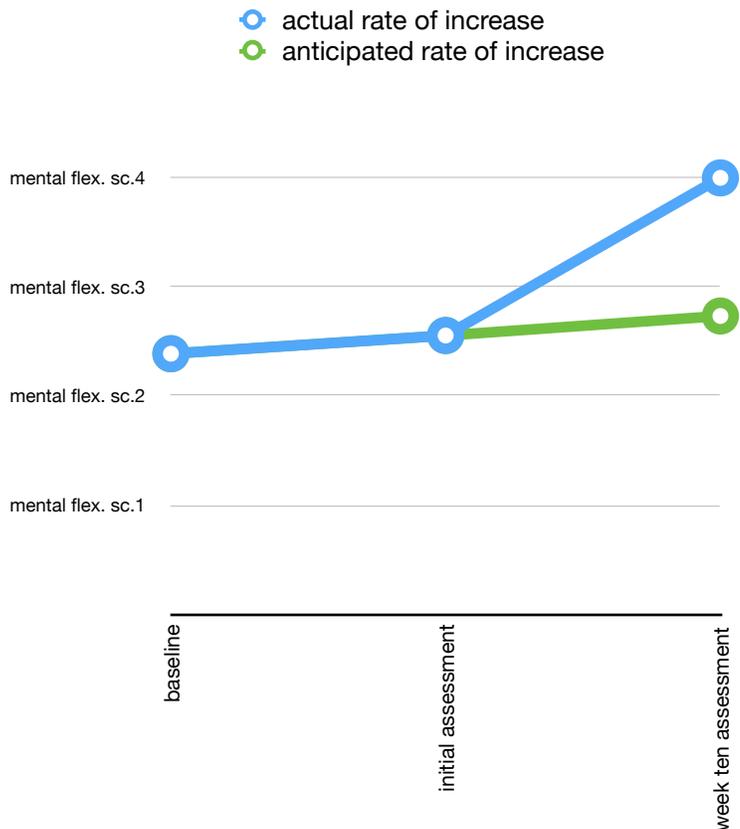
An 83 year old woman who experienced a fall at home was midway through the introductory course of LHTA. Her fall resulted in a head wound requiring stitches. She missed one class and was back the next week. A fall that would have resulted in most her age and younger requiring lengthy rehab and probable movement to an assisted care facility, instead resulted in her not only returning to class but more importantly returning to her independent life. The mental curiosity, social connectedness and optimism that initially brought her to LHTA was strengthened and validated as evidenced by her quick return after injury. That she brought the desire to learn and interest with her to this program is undisputable, but LHTA is a program that develops or maintains the very attributes which served her so well.

### Mental Flexibility

A basic task is introduced with a tangible outcome.

Exercise Example: Ball Toss

- Standing or seated in a circle, toss and catch a 12-14" ball.
- After success is achieved variable 1 is introduced-recite the first phrase of a known passage, one word added with each toss. After success is achieved with toss and catch and variable 1, variable 2 is added and so on.
- After one introductory course of 1 hour per week for ten weeks an 89% increase in participants ability to accept new information and successfully incorporate that information into an existing paradigm is the result.



### Somatosensory Awareness

The main exercises used to increase this awareness are:

- Breathing Basics
- Moving Meditation
- Coordination and Flow
- An accurate, objective assessment tool is being developed for Expressive Avenues: Wellness.
- Intentional attention to movements in a participant's body (diaphragm, lungs, viscera, etc.) raise awareness of and connection to their body. These exercises have the potential to further social interaction and promote optimism as well.

## Physical Perception

Exercise example:

- Participants are asked to estimate the number of steps it will take for them to cover a predetermined distance.
- After writing their estimate on a piece of paper, the facilitator counts the actual number of steps it takes while the participant recites aloud a known passage while walking.
- The difference between the number of steps participants estimate and the actual number of steps it takes decreased by 1.3 steps.
- As our abilities change, so must our perception of our abilities. This shrinking gap between what participants perceive their ability to be and what it actually is indicates an improvement in physical perception.
- An added benefit of the development of physical perception is confidence and increased spatial awareness, which encourages intentional engagement in the physical world.

- 1st PP Difference
- 2nd PP Difference
- 1st and 2nd perception improvement

