



# Reframing Aging Through Images: Recommendations from Research

## Images shape attitudes about aging.

A new study from AARP and the FrameWorks Institute, [Reframing Aging through Images](#), finds that communicators of all types have the power to shape attitudes and perceptions about aging with the images they choose.

### Why this matters:

- ▶ On average, people with more positive attitudes about aging at mid-life live longer, healthier lives than those with negative attitudes.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Adults age 50 and older spend 56 cents of every dollar in the United States.<sup>2</sup> By 2050, the annual economic contributions of the 50+ age group will triple, from \$8.3 trillion to \$26.8 trillion.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ 1 in 5 adults age 50+ have boycotted a brand based on ageist advertising.<sup>4</sup>

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Adults ages 35–49 are the most likely age group to change their attitudes about aging after exposure to certain types of imagery.

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## Tips for Communicators and Aging Advocates

**Tip 1:** Images of older people in a work setting have the greatest positive impact on attitudes about aging compared to other types of images. Images set in the community have a smaller positive impact than those set in a work setting, but a greater positive impact than images set in the home.

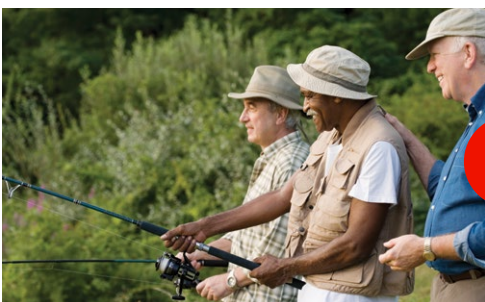
Workplace versus  
Community versus  
Home

*Best*



**Tip 2:** Images of physical activity in everyday situations have greater positive impact on attitudes about aging than images showing extraordinary physical feats.

Physical activity





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**Tip 3:** Images of older people with limited mobility have greater positive impact on attitudes about aging when people are shown engaging with others.

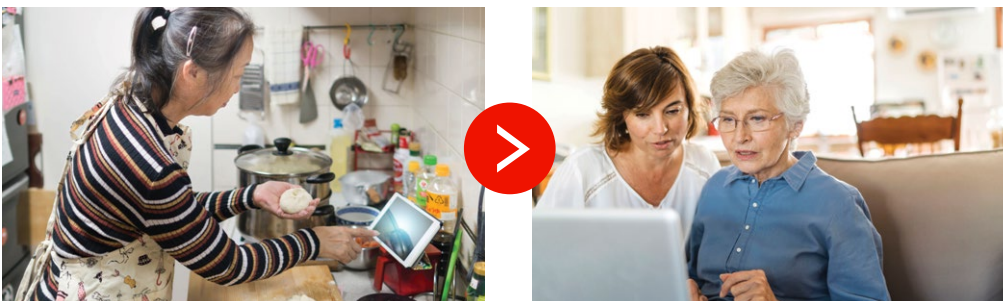
**Limited mobility**



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**Tip 4:** Images of older people using technology have greater positive impact on attitudes about aging when they show familiarity and ease of use.

**Technology**



1. Levy, et. al., "Longevity Increased by Positive Perceptions of Aging," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2002, Vol. 83, No. 2, 261-270.
2. Accius, Jean, and Joo Yeoun Suh. *The Longevity Economy Outlook: How People Ages 50 and Older Are Fueling Economic Growth, Stimulating Jobs, and Creating Opportunities for All*. Washington, DC: AARP Thought Leadership, December 2019. <https://doi.org/10.26419/int.00042.001>
3. Ibid.
4. Thayer, Colette, and Brittne Kakulla. *Language of Aging*. Washington, DC: AARP Research, September 2021. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00466.001>

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[www.aarp.org/ReframingAging](http://www.aarp.org/ReframingAging)

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