Aging in Community Roundtables

What Works Well

- We respect what everyone has to say.
- There is no wrong or right answer, just honest stories about our experiences.
- 10-15 people should be in each Roundtable.
- If more are present it is best to break into two smaller circles, but with consideration for people’ hearing each circle should be in separate rooms.
- Participants should be personally invited.
- Participants should be seniors, or senior caregivers, NOT “experts” on aging.
- Roundtable environments should be comfortable. Participants should sit in a circle and food often eases the mood.
- Everyone in the circle participates in the circle.
- A facilitator runs the circle and makes sure participates follow the “rules.”
- A note taker takes anonymous notes with general stories and themes.
- Roundtables last no longer than 90 minutes preferably they last 60 minutes.
- The facilitator begins by modeling a good 2 minute story.
- Roundtables are confidential.
- Paying attention to the timing of a meeting is key—try to consider times that best work for the participants. Especially take into consideration transportation.

What Doesn’t Work

- Roundtables are not surveys.
- We do not ask more than 2 questions.
- We do not answer in facts in figures, but in story form.
- We do not go over 90 minutes.
- We do not problem-solve within the circle and we do not talk politics/policy.
- We do not stack the circle with “experts.”
- Invitations through posters and general announcements do not attract the “right” people.