



TheRadicalAgeMovement

How to Create Awareness of Ageism in Your Community

We all have some cause we are passionate about. For those of us at The Radical Age Movement, we are confronting the age prejudice targeted at older adults and is endemic to our society. A real eye opener for those of us who are in the ageing field was to learn how many people have no idea what ageism is, what it looks like, the various forms it takes, and the resulting damage it causes. This is even true for victims of ageism.

So what did we do? We started our own awareness campaign!

You're probably reading this thinking, "No way I'm smart/talented/rich/organized enough to do that." If you are, STOP. You CAN do it. And here are some steps you can take to get started.

First, **do your homework**. You will need to present the facts about your cause and why people should pay attention to it. Gather relevant facts and figures, and then decide how you'll want to present them.

Next step is to **develop a mission statement**. In this case, you are in luck because The Radical Age Movement already has its mission statement.

The Radical Age Movement is a national grassroots effort that challenges traditional notions of aging.

We are building an intergenerational movement dedicated to confronting and eradicating age discrimination and its impact on older adults in all areas of cultural, professional, and community life.

Contact experts who know something about your cause. If it's environmental, get in touch with scientists and environmental engineers from your area. If it's medical, find doctors or other specialists. Explain your concerns and ask them what can be done to help. Try to get a quote that you can use in future marketing materials—having a professional endorse

your concerns will help make people stand up and take notice. Keep a list of your contacts, in case you want to go back and ***ask one of them to be a speaker at a future event.***

At this point, you want to **form a committee**. While it's not unheard of for one person to get a project off the ground, it will make things easier if you have a helping hand or two or five. Start with your friends and family. Tell them about your idea and ask them to pitch in. (This is where you can test out your mission statement!)

If one of the experts you spoke with seemed particularly interested, consider asking them to be a part of the group, even if just in name only. It can lend credibility to your effort.

Now that you have your facts, mission statement, and committee straight, **start spreading the word**. How you go about this will depend on your particular cause. Some ideas to consider:

- Create poster boards and signs to hang up around town.
- Write letters to the editor of your local paper.
- Set up a website and use social media to get the word out.
- Hand out business cards.
- Set up a table at a local fair or storefront.
- Ask local businesses to help distribute your literature.
- Hold a rally.

Here at The Radical Age Movement in New York, we've done many of the things on this list.

A first step towards recognizing ageism in the culture at large and within our own selves is to encourage groups to start **Consciousness Raising** circles.

- [Download our Conscious Raising Guide](#)

We have had a lot of success with our Monthly Events Program, where we invite professionals in their fields to make a presentation about ageism in their own areas of experience.

Examples are;

- A local geriatric care doctor talking about ageism in healthcare

- A local legislator talking about ageism in politics.
- A local educator talking about ageism in education.
- Local H.R. personnel, employment agency staff, et. al. talking about ageism in the workforce

We also make presentations around the city:

- *The Dance of Marginality: How Ageism Robs Us of Our Dignity*
This Power Point Presentation can be downloaded for your Chapter's use.
- *Ageism is an Important Factor in Elder Abuse*
This Power Point Presentation can be downloaded for your Chapter's use.

There are numerous ways you can start getting your cause noticed. The trick is to **be creative, be confident, and be bold.**

What are you waiting for? Get out there and change the world!