

Reframe Aging Minnesota Shifting the Narrative: Case Scenarios

How would you respond in these situations?

Family

At dinner, Linda laughed as she struggled to open a jar and said, “*Well, I’m officially useless now that I’m old.*” Her son told her she was being too hard on herself, but she waved him off. “*No, seriously,*” she said, “*people my age are slow, forgetful, and in the way.*” A few minutes later, she forgot where she had put her glasses and muttered, “*See? That’s what happens when you get ancient.*”

Workplace

During a hiring meeting, the team reviewed applications for a new marketing role. After looking over one candidate’s résumé, Jordan said, “*They definitely have a lot of experience... I just wonder how easily they’d adapt to the pace and culture here.*” Another manager asked what he meant, and Jordan shrugged. “*You know, we move fast, use a lot of new platforms, and the team skews pretty young.*” A few people exchanged uncomfortable looks as the conversation moved on to other applicants. No one directly mentioned the candidate’s age, but the implication was clear.

Online Engagement

You’re scrolling LinkedIn when you see a post from a colleague who leads an aging coalition in your state. The post opens: “*The senior care crisis isn’t just a someday problem, it’s a today emergency.*” The post goes on to detail demographic change, workforce shortages, underfunded programs, and strained family caregivers, closing with a brief mention of the coalition’s new task force. The comments are full of colleagues you know and respect. “*We are so underprepared for what’s coming.*” “*The burden on the system is going to be enormous.*” You hover over the comment box, unsure how to respond to colleagues you admire and who clearly mean well.

Services

During a staff meeting, the team discussed a new person who had been asking detailed questions about her service plan. Afterward, one nurse sighed and said, “*She’s probably just overwhelmed by all the technology and online portals we use now.*” The nurse laughed awkwardly and replied, “*I just meant people from her generation usually prefer things explained more simply.*” The room fell quiet for a moment before the discussion moved on.

