

# Stay Active Through Lifelong Learning

*"I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious." — Albert Einstein*

Lifelong learning provides a way for older adults to engage in physical, mental and social activities, which are key to healthy aging. For older adults, lifelong learning can take on many forms. Everything from taking history courses, discussing current events, participating in art classes or learning how to kayak is part of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning can also increase your connections and engagement with others!

## Getting Started

Area Agencies on Aging, senior centers, public libraries, parks, recreation agencies and many other local organizations offer a variety of lifelong learning opportunities within local communities as well as across the country via online offerings. You may also have a Lifelong Learning Institute nearby. Colleges and universities host more than 400 Lifelong Learning Institutes across the United States that offer social, intellectual and physical activities for those with an interest in learning. And don't worry. While Lifelong Learning Institutes designed for older adults are often located on college campuses, there are no tests, grades, educational requirements or homework! This means you can learn in a stress-free environment.



## Success Story: Sam

Years ago, Sam was a fashion artist for every department store in Philadelphia. When the field shifted to photography, there was no further need for his services—his career stalled and eventually Sam became destitute, depressed and isolated. One day, on a walk near a Lifelong Learning Institute at Temple University, Sam saw an art exhibition being assembled in the lobby. After a brief chat with the art teacher arranging the display, Sam received a pass to attend the program. Soon after that meeting, Sam received a scholarship to participate in the class. Just one year later, Sam went from student to teacher at the Institute. His participation in the Lifelong Learning Institute reinvigorated his interest in art and education—and helped him re-engage in the world. From a chance meeting, Sam's involvement with lifelong learning gave him new purpose and well-being.

## Connect with the Joys of Lifelong Learning

Does lifelong learning sound interesting? Visit the resources below to learn more about lifelong learning opportunities in your community.

- ▶ The Eldercare Locator ([eldercare.acl.gov](https://eldercare.acl.gov); 1 (800) 677-1116) can connect you to your local Area Agency on Aging to find community classes and events.
- ▶ Visit the Directory of Lifelong Learning Institutes to find a Lifelong Learning Institute near you ([sps.northwestern.edu/oshernrc/resources/lifelong-learning/us-lifelong-learning-institute-directory.php](https://sps.northwestern.edu/oshernrc/resources/lifelong-learning/us-lifelong-learning-institute-directory.php)).
- ▶ See if there is an Osher Institute near you ([sps.northwestern.edu/oshernrc/find-an-osher-near-you.php](https://sps.northwestern.edu/oshernrc/find-an-osher-near-you.php)) to engage in learning opportunities.
- ▶ Try USA.Gov ([www.usa.gov/libraries](https://www.usa.gov/libraries)) to locate your local library.



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