

Seventh Annual Senior Conference and Expo Planned

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Our Senior Agenda Coalition's Seventh Annual Senior Conference and Expo will be held on October 24, 2014 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick. Its theme will be "Aging with Purpose, Meaning and Dignity." We will present topics that seniors have told us they want to hear about. For example, since "old age is not a disease," many seniors have asked us to focus more this year on positive aspects of aging. We believe we have accomplished that with this Conference.

We will offer one option that is a day-long series of presentations about finding meaning and purpose in our lives as we age. Keynoter Barbara Howard will begin by exploring how "Meaning Matters" in our lives. Following her address, Barbara will lead a workshop where participants will share their experiences of seeking and finding meaning in their lives. Our luncheon speaker will introduce "Life Reimagined," a new program under AARP auspices. It offers a step-by-step approach to help seniors discover possibilities for "what comes next." Finally a "Life Reimagined" workshop will offer the chance for asking questions and exploring that program in greater depth.

There will be a rich variety of other workshops available on topics including: tools for caregivers, co-housing, improving fitness, healthy aging, LBGT elders' issues, lifelong learning, planning for Medicare, and community organizing for senior power.

Some people tell us that when they hear "conference" they assume it's an event for professionals, not for them. That's not our Conference! While everyone is welcome, we aim for a primary audience of seniors, their families and friends. Thanks to our sponsors and exhibitors, we have made our all-day Conference affordable at a cost of \$35 for seniors aged 60 and older, \$25 if they are on fixed incomes. The registration fee for all others is \$50. It includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

Janice Blanchard, speaking at our 2010 Conference, used the seasons of the year as a metaphor for appreciating seniorhood as a special time in our lives. She said, "In our society with the

whole ‘anti-aging’ movement, we try to hold onto the summer and forestall the fall...all of a sudden we end up in the winter without going through the ‘autumn of our years’ and really enjoying the foliage, the change of colors, and the preparation work.” Our Conference is about seeing the “autumn of our years” as filled with opportunities to continue to learn, to grow, and therefore to find meaning in our lives.

You may register for the Conference at our Website www.senioragendari.org or may request a registration by mail by calling 351-6710 and leaving your mailing address. If you are a senior citizen, a baby boomer about to turn 65, an adult child of aging parents, a professional or volunteer working with seniors, or simply someone who wants to create a better future for yourself as you age, you really should join us on October 24. It’s the only event of its kind in Rhode Island.