Promoting Engagement with Life in Older Adulthood

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2. Executive Summary

This project, conducted by researchers in Flinders University's College of Education, Psychology and Social Work in partnership with the SA Health Office for Ageing Well, represents an initial scoping exercise conducted to inform the development and evaluation of a new broader program of research designed to promote engagement with life among community dwelling older South Australians. This broader program of work aligns directly with the South Australian Government's Ageing Action Plan 2014-2019, and most specifically the goal of "engaging and empowering the community". Using a qualitative focus group methodology, the specific aims were to explore:

a. Older adults' needs and preferences related to activity engagement

b. Factors that promote social, community, and civic engagement as opposed to isolation

c. Whether older adults perceive different approaches to, or modes of delivery of activity intervention to be more or less appealing or accessible.

A particular focus of the study was to gauge older adults' assessments of whether the principles of behavioural activation- an established approach to promoting activities in clinical populations- represented an appropriate foundation for development of a new person-centred approach to promoting activity engagement among the general older adult population. We held five focus groups with thirty-one adults aged 60 and over. Analysis of the focus group transcripts revealed the following key findings:

- Older adults prefer to engage with activities that are personally meaningful.
- Motivating factors that made activities enjoyable and meaningful included providing support to the community, developing and challenging one's own skills and capacities, and fostering social connections.

- Barriers to late life engagement included factors both internal (gender, health, personality) and external (social networks, ageist attitudes, and transitional periods such as retirement).

- Older adults viewed principles underlying behavioural activation as providing an appropriate foundation for a person-centred activity intervention.

- Suggestions for implementing the activity intervention included using a face-to-face group format, employing skilled facilitators, and considering the cost of the intervention and how we should recruit older adults for the program.

- Common discourse centred around the difficulties remaining engaged during transitional periods, such as retirement or losing a loved one.

Based on the findings summarised above, the following recommendations were made to guide the next phase of the project:

1. The principles of behavioural activation represent a conceptual and practice-based foundation for promoting late life activity engagement that is likely to be acceptable to many older adults

2. In planning a behavioural activation-focused approach to activity intervention, the research team should consider the feasibility of combining individual and group-based modes of delivery within a single protocol

3. The research team should explore the utility of pre-emptive "early-intervention" approaches designed to promote sustained and ongoing engagement across significant life transitions such as retirement from work and widowhood.

4. Approaches to promoting engagement are likely to be more effective if incorporating a proximal human element (i.e., face-to-face facilitation) rather than more distal facilitator engagement (e.g., online or self-directed provision of support/facilitation).

5. Addressing ageist attitudes in the community represents an important goal as part of broader efforts to enhance older adults' participation and to foster intergenerational connections

6. Care should be taken in recruiting activity program facilitators to ensure they have the appropriate interpersonal skills to maximise success of the program and participant adherence

7. As a potentially "hard-to-reach" population, efforts to recruit isolated or disengaged older adults into an activity program trial should be underpinned by a comprehensive recruitment plan employing multiple strategies.

Finally, the project involved compilation of online resources identifying diverse opportunities for activity participation in the community. These resources are complemented with a taxonomy of common activities that can be used as a basis for developing a suite of practical resources to ultimately be incorporated within the activity program design and are included in the Appendices.

3. Overview

Remaining socially active and engaged in meaningful activity is a cornerstone of ageing well. While many older adults lead purposeful and socially active lives, for some, changes in life circumstances that accompany ageing, such as retirement, widowhood, or declining health can make remaining engaged in meaningful activities difficult. Because activity engagement is widely recognised as a core component of ageing well (Bowling & Deppe, 2005), numerous programs have been designed and implemented with the purpose of promoting activity engagement in the older community. However, formal evaluations of such programs are often not conducted, and the evaluation research that has been done has frequently produced underwhelming findings in relation to program efficacy (Findlay, 2003; Gardiner, Geldenhuys, & Gott., 2016). Furthermore, current activity programs are typically activity-specific (e.g. animal interventions or exercise groups) limiting their applicability across individuals.

This report presents findings of preliminary scoping research conducted as part of a broader program of work being undertaken by researchers at Flinders University in partnership with the South Australian Office for Ageing Well, ECH and City of Onkaparinga, concerned with developing new and innovative approaches to promoting older adults' activity engagement. Existing programs for older adults are predominantly based around specific activities (e.g., walking groups, social get-togethers, cultural activities). Programs of this type no doubt provide excellent engagement opportunities for many older participants; however at the same time they are limited in scope. For example, a walking group may be inaccessible to someone with serious functional impairment, and a book club might not appeal to someone without a personal history of reading and appreciation of literature. Our ultimate aim is to develop a flexible activity program that can be tailored to the unique circumstances of individuals, by taking a person-centred approach. To this end, we plan to adapt an established psychological intervention - behavioural activation (described in more detail

below) - which will provide a framework for facilitating older adults' participation in purposeful and value congruent activities.

Although protocols for behavioural activation are established in the psychology literature, researchers have only recently recognised the potential for applying the principles of behavioural activation with a view to promoting well-being in non-clinical populations (Mazzucchelli, Kane, & Rees, 2010), including older populations. Therefore an important first step in our broader program of work was to speak with older adults themselves about (1) what is important to them in terms of their activity engagement, (2) what they recognise as barriers and facilitators to their own engagement, and (3) whether they could foresee behavioural activation based approaches working as a means of encouraging meaningful activity engagement, including the possible advantages, disadvantages, and challenges associated with such an approach.

To this end, we conducted a series of focus groups with older South Australians that provide the basis for this report. In the sections that follow, we provide an overview of issues related to engagement with life and ageing well, and argue for the need for new, carefully evaluated activity programs designed to promote engagement. We then report the outcomes of the focus groups, evaluating the emergent themes in terms of their implications for designing a new activity intervention.

A final aim of this project was to create a taxonomy of activities that could be undertaken as a means of remaining meaningfully engaged with life, and to identify some key resources that might be used to link activity types with existing opportunities for engagement in the community. Results of this secondary research component, which will be used to inform development of the specific behavioural activation protocol, are provided in the Appendices.

3.1 Engagement with life and ageing well

As the world's population continues to grow older, defining what it means to age well is of increasing importance. The past two decades have seen a shift from viewing ageing well as merely the absence of disease to a focus on growth and maintaining vitality in later life. This shift in thinking has resulted in gerontologists emphasising the importance of participating in purposeful activity through late life. An important early contribution to notions of ageing well was made by Rowe and Kahn (1997) who proposed that active engagement with life, and not just the maintenance of cognitive and physical functioning and the absence of disease, is a cornerstone of ageing well. The authors defined engagement with life as including both *supportive* social relationships (relationships that provide both instrumental and emotional support) and the maintenance of participation in *personally meaningful* activities. Since Rowe and Kahn's (1997) definition of ageing well, various studies have reported beneficial outcomes of remaining engaged with life through older age, including enhanced health and well-being (e.g., Adams, Leibbrandt, & Moon, 2011). The importance of ongoing engagement into later life is further highlighted in the World Health Organisation's (2017) plan of action on ageing and health, where it is noted that: *Older people participate in, and contribute to, society in many ways, including as mentors, caregivers, artists, consumers, innovators, entrepreneurs and members of the workforce. This social engagement may in turn reinforce the health and well-being of older people themselves (p. 3).*

3.2 Promoting engagement with life

Although staying engaged is clearly important, purposeful activity declines with advancing age (Esposito et al., 2014) and not all older adults continue to lead socially active lives (Findlay, 2003). At the extreme, there are socially isolated and lonely older adults who report both a low level of social interaction (social isolation) and are dissatisfied with their amount of social contacts (social loneliness; Findlay, 2003). Furthermore, 16.2% of Australian adults aged 65 or over reported either not leaving their home or not leaving their

home as often as they liked (Productivity Commission, 2015). Increasing engagement levels among those who are objectively isolated and disengaged represents one important endeavour. However, it is also important not to ignore the older adults representing the middle ground of the engagement/disengagement continuum. That is, older adults who are not socially isolated, but at the same time could benefit themselves and their communities through increasing their degree of engagement.

Numerous programs have been implemented to increase activity engagement among older adults. Examples range from exercise programs, friendship groups, training in information technology use, intergenerational programs to animal interventions (Gardiner et al., 2016). Recent systematic reviews have synthesised the findings from a range of studies that evaluate the effectiveness of activity programs in increasing engagement levels. However, these reviews have concluded that evaluations of activity programs have in most cases (1) produced underwhelming findings in terms of the activity program's efficacy, (2) been methodologically flawed, or (3) have not been conducted at all (Findlay et al., 2003; Gardiner et al., 2016). Perhaps one reason underlying the mixed evidence for program efficacy is that an individual's willingness to engage with a given program depends on their experiences, personal preferences and abilities (Culos-Reed, Rejeski, McAuley, Ockene, & Roter, 2000). Current programs, however, are activity-specific, and therefore also *interest*- and *ability*-specific, thereby reducing their potential to be effective on a broad scale. For example, an animal intervention is only appropriate for those who enjoy interacting with animals. Likewise, an exercise program is only feasible for those with a certain level of physical ability. Therefore, instead of providing activity-specific programs, a person-centred approach that considers each individual's interests, needs and abilities represents a promising way forward.

3.3 Behavioural Activation

One such person-centred approach is behavioural activation. Behavioural activation was originally developed as a treatment for depression, however, it has recently proved successful in promoting well-being and engagement in personally meaningful activities in adults without mental illness (Read, Mazzucchelli and Kane, 2016). Various different approaches incorporating behavioural activation are reported in the literature (e.g., Lejuez, Hopko, & Hopko, 2001; Mazzucchelli, 2010; Reynolds, 2016); however most involve the following core elements: First, (often with the help of a trained facilitator) clients identify important life areas and their values within each life area. For example, a client may place importance in the life area of personal relationships- and in particular- value being a good mother and grandmother. After the client determines their values, both the facilitator and client generate a list of activities that map onto the client's values. For example, taking the grandchildren to a movie would be an activity that aligns with the client's value of being a good grandmother. The facilitator then helps the client to schedule and monitor their activity engagement. The underlying assumption behind behavioural activation is that whereas clients require assistance to initiate their activity engagement, once they are engaged, their enjoyment for these activities will act as a reinforcer so that participation in activities is sustained.

Our broader program of research will be the first to use behavioural activation in the context of promoting engagement among older adults from non-clinical populations. In the present study, we sought the views of older adults to obtain a clearer picture of whether or not they regarded the proposed approach as promising, and what the specific characteristics of such an approach might look like if it is to be effective.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

Participants were primarily recruited through the Office for Ageing Well's Feedback Network. The Feedback Network is a group of over 2,000 older adults who have indicated

their willingness to provide advice on policies and programs and to be approached with research participation opportunities. The Office for Ageing Well emailed each Feedback Member a call out to participate in this study. Interested members contacted the researchers to receive further information in the form of an information sheet and consent form. The Office for Ageing Well's call out generated secondary interest through a snowballing effect. Friends of Feedback Network members, who heard about our study through word of mouth, also contacted the researchers for further information and were sent an information sheet and consent form. Altogether 88 older adults responded to the initial call out. Of these, 69 lodged their interest after reading the information sheet and consent form. The number of interested older adults exceeded the number that could be accommodated in the project. As a result, 40 older adults participated in one of five focus groups. The Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee of the Flinders University gave ethics approval for the project.

4.2 Procedure

Participants were invited to attend one focus group to discuss their engagement with life, the barriers to such engagement, and their views regarding the application of behaviour activation principles for an activity program. When participants lodged their interest, they provided their postcode so that the researchers could group participants by their location and then schedule focus groups in venues that maximised the accessibility for each group. Each focus group held 6-12 participants and the duration ranged from 50 minutes to 80 minutes, with the majority being closer to 80 minutes in duration. The rooms were organised such that participants and the researchers sat around a large table to facilitate discussion. After collecting the consent forms, the researchers formally introduced themselves, briefly explained the purpose of the study and what participation would involve.

The discussion commenced after all participants provided written consent and verbally consented to being audio recorded. The purpose of focus groups is to generate unstructured discussion between participants. As a result, there were no structured

questions, however the moderator (Dr Windsor) guided the conversations according to a list of key areas for discussion. The focus groups began with discussion of enablers of, and barriers to engagement with life. Next, the moderator briefly explained the principles of behaviour activation and how they might be applied to an activity program. Following this, the group discussion focused on behavioural activation as a mode of delivery.

4.3 Data analysis

The focus group audio recordings were transcribed (with names removed) by two 3rd year Psychology work experience students at Flinders University using NVivo 11. Thematic analysis was undertaken using NVivo 11. Thematic analysis is a method used to identify and organise themes within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first stage of data analysis involved the researchers reading and familiarising themselves with the transcripts and recording initial ideas for themes. After familiarising themselves with the data set, the first author coded each focus group transcript. The coding involved both inductive and deductive approaches. The deductive, or top-down, approach uses predetermined research questions and theory to guide coding and the creation of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, we wanted to explore how best to deliver behaviour activation for older adults and therefore searched our data set for discussion pertaining to the best approach for delivering behaviour activation, resulting in the theme *modes of delivery*. The inductive, or bottom-up, approach uses the data, and not predetermined theory, to develop a coding frame and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, a common, but unanticipated, theme across focus groups was using behaviour activation as a preventative measure before transitional periods, such as retirement, resulting in the theme *using behaviour activation for transitional periods.* The preliminary coding scheme was sent to the second author to further refine the coding and discuss ideas for themes and sub-themes. The first author organised themes and sub-themes, which were then further refined and finalised collectively by both authors.

5. Results and Discussion

The focus group discourse was organised into two primary themes; characteristics of late life engagement and views pertaining to using behaviour activation as an activity intervention. Table 1 lists the primary, secondary and sub- themes.

Table 1

Primary, secondary and sub- themes

Primary theme	Secondary theme	subthemes
Characteristics of late life engagement	Motivations for engagement	• Community • Self- and social- development
	Barriers to engagement	• Internal barriers to engagement • External/contextual barriers to engagement • Multiple barriers
Views pertaining to the use of behaviour activation as an activity intervention	Connecting older adults to value-consistent activities	
	The practicalities of implementing behaviour activation	• Modes of delivery • Facilitator characteristics • Perceived challenges to implementation
	Using behaviour activation for transitional periods	

5.1 Characteristics of late life engagement

The theme *characteristics of late life engagement* represents the opinions and experiences of participants regarding late life engagement. Participants specifically discussed the factors that motivate and inhibit their own, as well as other older adults', late life engagement. The discussion of late life engagement fell into two secondary themes, Motivations for engagement, and Barriers to engagement.

5.1.1 Motivations for Engagement.

In addition to discussing the activities that they currently took part in, participants described their motivations for engaging with these activities. There was no dispute that the activities most valued were those that held personal meaning and were enjoyable.

"It's interesting, I think lots of people get told that volunteering is the answer and I believe it is, but I think that there's one key thing that's not advertised so much and the volunteering that you actually do has to have meaning. Yours clearly does and so does yours, mine does. I will never work on meals on wheels, it would do my head in, but the dogs… that has great meaning" Woman 1 (FG 3)

In this quote, Woman 1 explains how she volunteers with dogs, because working with dogs is personally meaningful to her. However, she also acknowledges that she does not engage with Meals on Wheels because it is not personally meaningful. Like Woman 1, as well as discussing the importance of engaging with activities that hold some personal significance, participants recognised that they also disengage from certain activities because they are not meaningful or enjoyable. For example,

 "Not many people here in this group go walking! Yeah as I see it, I don't. I hate walking"
Male (FG 1)

In addition to recognising that the activities participants engaged with were personally meaningful, participants indicated that the different activities they engaged with were meaningful to them for different reasons.

*"**Moderator:** and do you think the different, different sort of activities you do, do you value them for different reasons?*
__Woman 2:__ no, no, different reasons absolutely" (FG 4)

But what makes an activity meaningful? The answer to this question has practical implications because behavioural activation's primary mechanism for increasing activity engagement is having clients identify their own values and then engage with value-consistent, and therefore meaningful, activities. Furthermore, as illustrated above, older adults will disengage with activities that are not personally meaningful or enjoyable. Knowing the sorts of factors that can make an activity meaningful for an older adult will help guide a program facilitator's discussion with clients when identifying values and activities. Participants identified a range of factors that made an activity personally meaningful and therefore motivated their engagement. These factors fell into two sub-themes, community, and self- and social-development.

Community.

Participants discussed engaging with certain activities in order to benefit the community. This was both in terms of helping individual people and the broader community as a whole. For example, some older adults reported enjoying participating in a table tennis group because they had the ability to help develop the table tennis skills of individual group members.

__Moderator:__ Do you think part of what makes it a good group is not just the enjoyment of playing and the social component but also the feeling like maybe those of you who are better players or a little bit more capable in some ways are able to help others who maybe aren't quite at the same level. Is that part of what makes it…

***Focus Group 1:** *Universal yes ***

Other participants discussed engaging with activities, such as organising and running a leisure group or gardening, to help others at the community level. For example, Male 6 explains how Male 5 has facilitated a group that serves the community.

"I find this [activity] a community service that [Male 5] has used the church as an avenue of providing community service." Male 6 (FG 1)

Self- and social-development

In addition to motives that serve others, participants also discussed growth and development motives in terms of the self and social relationships. Skill utilisation and development was a commonly referred to motive. Specifically, participants discussed using and further developing their skills gained, both professionally and recreationally, earlier in life. As illustrated in the discussion below, the use and development of these skills can take on a different focus across the transition from work to retirement.

> ***Woman 4:*** *I, want to describe it in a different way, working, I'm still working*
> ***Woman 2:*** *Exactly, well I don't, I don't distinguish between work and life*
> ***Woman 4:*** *yeah*
> ***Woman 2:*** *because I don't go to work, I don't have an employer*
> ***Woman 4:*** *so for me that work is like when you have to earn your living*
> ***Woman:*** *mmm yep*
> ***Woman 4:*** *when you have to earn your living you are tied down*
> ***Woman:*** *mmm*
> ***Woman 4:*** *to certain hours*
> ***Woman 2:*** *Yes and that happens…*
> ***Woman 4:*** *and when you're raising children, you are tied down.*
> ***Woman 4:*** *but, when you are past those stages, you are free to keep on working uhh*
> ***Woman 10:*** *and lets-lets n….*
> ***Woman 4:*** *uhh, in your in your interests and working and expanding your mind and stimulating your brain. (FG 2)*

This conversation shows how these older adults now view their engagement with activities that utilise professional skills. Specifically, working life involved a set of demands (e.g. hours, earning a wage), but now without these demands participants have the freedom and time to determine exactly how and when they engage with activities that employ professional skills. Due to this new freedom, participants also discussed the ability to pursue new activities that they previously had insufficient time for, as illustrated below. This new freedom, flexibility and time to pursue new activities is consistent with previous research where older adults discuss the positives of retirement (Quine, Wells, de Vaus, & Kendig, 2007).

> *"Umm, when I was retiring from my, retiring from my government service position the receptionist asked "oh [Woman 4], what are you going to do?" and I said, all the things I haven't been able to do" Woman 4 (FG 2)*

"Moderator: *so it sounds like the sort of work you are doing now is building on all those skills that you developed through professional life but perhaps with a bit more flexibility to do it the way without some of those responsibilities with work that we don't necessarily want.* **Male 2:** *It's fantastic. Low stress. I can pick Monday afternoon 3 o'clock to 6 o'clock or 5 o'clock to go for a focus group without having to do anything else" (FG 3)*

As well as using and developing their skill set, participants discussed engaging with activities to develop their intellect, internal self and physical self. This involved engaging with new and challenging activities to develop the self and furthering knowledge through activities such as volunteering at the art gallery.

> *"Some of the challenges um, were doing things that you've never done before. So what I find is that when you do something, uh, different it engages you, it helps you learn so that's, that's what I tried to do." Woman 4 (FG 2)*

As well as developing mentally, participants commonly discussed the health restrictions and conditions that can accompany ageing. Participants therefore commonly stated that they engaged with activities to increase their flexibility and muscle tone.

> *"It's been for good for the exercise point of view especially as you get older*
> *you need to be flexing and it's a good way of doing it." Male 6 (FG 1)*

Activities were also used to further develop and strengthen social relationships. Participants reported engaging with activities to strengthen pre-existing relationships. For example, Male 5 discussed taking up a sport with his wife to strengthen their marriage.

> *"And I thought it would be good for the marriage. So she had about 18*
> *months of coaching and she can hit a reasonable ball out there" Male 5*
> *(FG 1)*

As well as strengthening pre-existing relationships, participants were also motivated to broaden their social network with likeminded individuals. However, some stated that a pre-existing shared interest among group members was unnecessary, and that sometimes joining a social group with diverse interests was enjoyable too.

> *"and sometimes you don't necessarily have to have a shared interest*
> *because I am part of a group, … I think very few of us have a common*
> *interest, but when we get together we laugh and we have a lot of fun"*
> *Woman 2 (FG 3)*

Taken together, a common motive for engaging with activities, and therefore what gave meaning to an activity, was development. This included both community development and development of the self where participants engaged with activities to cultivate new or already established skills, to grow intellectually, as a person and physically and to strengthen their social network. This aligns with the set of life values that facilitators typically explore with clients during behaviour activation. These life values include strengthening relationships, furthering ones education and career, engaging with hobbies and developing spiritually and physically (Lejuez et al., 2001).

5.1.2 Barriers to Engagement.

There were clear motivating factors that prompted participants to engage with certain activities. However, not all older adults remain engaged. Participants therefore also drew on

their experiences to discuss times when engaging with their activities was not so easy. The theme *Barriers to engagement* was organised into two subthemes reflecting those factors both internal to, and external to individuals.

"I mean there is some external barriers, but there is also internal barriers." Male 2 (FG 5)

Internal barriers.

Participants discussed a range of barriers to engagement that reside within the individual. These predominantly included physical and mental health, gender, personality, and technological skill.

"health is... The fundamental thing I think." Male 6 (FG 1)

Health restrictions, both physical and mental, were identified as significant barriers. Examples of health restrictions that made engaging with activities difficult were depression, being anxious, general physical declines, reaching exhaustion level quicker, intolerance to loud noises, vision impairments, arthritis, reduced flexibility, and bad knees. These health restrictions were noted as making it difficult for individuals to walk to local facilitates, engage with grandchildren, maintain work, and to engage with activities in general. Participants noted that the physical restrictions were especially important for the oldest old (e.g., those aged 85 and older). One participant described an aunt in her 90s who lost her vision and as a result, finds it difficult to participate socially.

"…so she can't look after herself and she can't participate in virtually anything, they have singalongs but she can't read the book" Woman 6 (FG 2)

Personality, gender and technological skill were also identified as barriers within the individual. These personality factors included the preference to not engage socially or lacking the motivation. There was a consensus across focus groups that males found it more difficult to engage with social activities, which participants attributed to women more readily engaging with conversation and making social connections.

"…because I think it's always harder for men. Women will talk to, you know, they stand and talk to a brick wall if they could. You know it's easier for us, but I think it's harder for men to make that connection" Woman 2 (FG 1)

Finally, participants also discussed social media as a way of connecting socially, however, underdeveloped technological skill and preference to not be on social media were reported as barriers engaging socially or with activities online.

External/contextual barriers to engagement.

Participants also discussed factors external to the individual that can present as barriers. These included one's immediate social network, broader community structures and transitional periods. Participants reported that having a limited number of family and friends both in terms of quantity and proximity, was a barrier.

"one of the hardest things when you suddenly find yourself, whether it's through widowhood or whether it's through separation, divorce, you lose friends... because I experienced that and then to try to make new friends as we get older is exceptionally hard..." Female (FG 3)

However, having a family within close proximity was also seen as a potential barrier under some circumstances. Participants explained that when you have a close and supportive network, you can become dependent on this network for support. This dependency will have negative effects on engagement levels when that family member or friend either moves or passes away. Another reason for close networks presenting as barriers was duties that accompany certain relationships, such as looking after grandchildren or becoming a carer for a loved one.

"Yeah, there's a converse of that, having family close can actually tie you down because you've gotta do your grand- uh babysitting for grandchildren. School holidays are deadly if you're older" Female (FG 2)

"sometimes I think being older and being in a relationship is obstacle to engaging in something like that because it's so seductive to just lie on the

lounge with the partner... have the cup of tea and not look outside" Woman
5 (FG 3)

"I have become my elderly demented mother's principal carer. So other
plans like running around Europe are on the shelf at the moment." Male 2
(FG 5)

In addition to discussing social networks as a barrier, participants discussed broader community and cultural factors. Participants recognised that culture and language and socio-economic status could prevent late life engagement, but without explicitly discussing why. The community factors that participants recognised as barriers mapped onto the areas that can prevent a city from being age friendly (Lui, Everingham, Warburton, Cuthill, & Bartlett, 2009). These barriers included a lack of transportation, safety concerns for older adults, activities closing down over school holidays, ineffective implementation of activity programs due to funding, a reduction in community values such as belonging, and ageism. Participants also suggested that a community that addresses these barriers would do better at encouraging late life engagement, aligning with the literature on age friendly communities.

"…where once your community, all your neighbours and you, did a lot of
things in the street and so on, all that is gone now…" Male 6 (FG 1)

*"**Male 4:** Maybe we need those values back in…. they are values that are*
important to people about caring and belonging, you know, being
welcomed in and sort of being a part of…
***Woman 1:** community values" (FG5)*

Ageism was a common theme across focus groups, especially in relation to the difficulty in keeping and finding employment. Participants also reported internalising this ageism and as a result changing their behaviour so that it did not conform to ageist stereotypes. For example, one man did not participate in croquet because it is viewed as an older adult's sport. This internalisation of the community's ageist stereotypes, called interactive ageism, is consistent with past literature that has explored older adults' views of ageism in the community (Minichiello, Browne, & Kendig, 2000).

> *"that ah, people find, if they become redundant after the age of 40 there's very little chance at getting another job" Male 3 (FG 4)*

"Age discrimination is number 1 in my book" Male 3 (FG 5)

Participants also discussed the difficulty in adjusting to transitional periods such as retirement, becoming a carer or losing a spouse. When discussing transitional periods as a barrier, participants only elaborated on how retirement presents as a barrier. Specifically, participants discussed three aspects of retirement that can pose as barriers, these were a shift in your identity, adjusting to a less structured life and losing contact with work friends. These barriers are consistent with what older adults have reported previously (Quine et al., 2007). Some participants suggested that retirement was tougher for men because they gain much of their identity and social network from work, whereas other participants argued that it was just as difficult for women.

> *"If you've relied on work to provide you with an identity then this is a…not what do I do, it's who am I?" Woman 2 (FG 2)*

"That lack of routine of not getting up and having to be at a meeting at 9 o'clock and another one at 10 o'clock at night or something really struck me" Woman 2 (FG 5)

Multiple barriers.

As well as discussing barriers to engagement in isolation, participants also demonstrated an understanding that multiple barriers may be present and interact on their effect on disengagement. For example, a woman may lose her husband and be an introvert, therefore the woman would be even less likely to engage with social activities compared to if only one of those barriers was present.

5.2 Views on behavioural activation as an activity intervention

Another aim of this study was to explore whether older adults viewed the development of an activity intervention as useful and whether behavioural activation principles would be likely to provide an appropriate foundation for such a program. Overall,

participants were positive towards the creation of an activity intervention. They agreed that engagement was crucial for health and wellbeing and that if there was a program that promoted late life engagement, health and wellbeing in the older population would likely be improved. For example,

> *"I only think it is a worthwhile study because I know from a lot of people my age or a little bit older who would benefit from encouragement to be engaged more and … It is important to be able for older people to engage [so] that they are healthy, and not only physically, but also mentally." Male 2 (FG 3)*

Male 1 (FG 4) also suggested that implementing an activity intervention would result in less burden on health services.

> *"Australia has got a much older population growing at a rapid rate, right? The more you can keep those people engaged and doing things, the less a drain it's gonna be on any of the health services and other services that are possibly needed." Male 1 (FG 4)*

5.2.1 Connecting older adults to value consistent activities.

While creating an activity intervention was viewed as a valuable pursuit, there is currently much on offer in terms of activity-specific programs in the community (e.g., social groups, for examples see Appendix C). Therefore, we also aimed to explore participants' views on whether an approach grounded in behavioural activation principles could offer something useful and unique above and beyond existing programs. Participants noted that there is currently a lot on offer in terms of specific activities for older adults in the community, however, what older adults may require help with is being connected to these activities and support in taking the first few steps towards engaging with the activity.

> *"All those [individual activities] are in place isn't it? It's really just, what you're looking for is the connecting thing." Woman 2 (FG 2)*

> *"…so it's that very first step..." Male 5 (FG 5)*

As well as connecting individuals to activities and assisting them to take their first

steps, participants discussed the importance of linking individuals with activities that align with their preferences, interests and skills. Recall that participants discussed being motivated to engage with activities that were personally meaningful to them. As well as recognising that they themselves engaged with personally meaningful activities, participants also recognised the promise of an activity intervention that could identify an older adult's values, interests and skills and link them to activities that align with these factors. This may mean that some older adults may select activities that are completed in solitude and at home.

> *"I think it would be really useful having sort of experienced people such as yourselves coming and talking to us to help us think through what wh- where could we contribute? What, what skills do we have, what skills do we prefer to use?" Woman 4 (FG 4)*

> *"First you need to chat with people who are involved, find out what their triggers that activates them to come to to join a group." Male 2 (FG 1)*

Therefore, participants recognised that older adults need help to be *connected* to *value consistent* activities and *support* in their initial engagement with these activities. This sentiment aligns with what we suggested was a strength of using behavioural activation as the foundation of an activity program. Behavioural activation is designed to facilitate the client's identification of their values, selection of activities that align with these values and subsequently supporting participation in those activities.

It is also important to note that participants recognised that the individual values and preferences held by older adults may mean that some older adults will not want to engage with an activity intervention, even when they might be objectively regarded as disengaged and/or socially isolated. It is therefore of course the prerogative of such older adults to not be involved with such an activity program.

As well as discussing the benefits of the principles of behavioural activation as an intervention, participants discussed using these principles in their own life when they faced barriers to their own engagement. Specifically, when participants no longer had resources to engage with an activity, they chose an alternative activity. The process they followed was

one where they - perhaps implicitly - identified what value or values the activity that was no longer viable was consistent with, and selected alternative activities that still aligned with these values. For example, Male 4 discusses how he had been a lifelong surfer, but health restrictions meant that continuing surfing would endanger his life. Instead of becoming disengaged, he identified the value that the activity served, which was excitement, and engaged with an alternative activity, gold detecting, that was within his means and gave him the same value (i.e., excitement).

> *"I've surfed for nearly all my life. Born surfing. Then it was ah getting to life threatening to surf at 68 then I was very very um I did not know what to do with myself… So I tried to get something with ah equally exciting or no not too much uh strength required so I ah took up uh gold detecting." Male 4 (FG 1)*

These discussions provide some indirect evidence that engaged older adults may implicitly use strategies consistent with the principles of behavioural activation (i.e., identifying life values and selecting activities that map onto these values) when overcoming barriers to activity. Taken together, older adults both explicitly supported the idea of using behavioural activation principles to inform development of an activity intervention, and discussed using similar processes themselves to overcome barriers to their own activity engagement.

5.2.2 The practicalities of implementing behaviour activation.

In addition to discussing their views on the potential applicability of behavioural activation principles as a basis for an activity intervention, participants discussed the practicalities likely to be associated with the implementation of such a program. This discourse was organised into the following subthemes: mode of delivery, facilitator characteristics and the perceived challenges of implementation.

Mode of delivery.

While the basic principles of behavioural activation have been applied relatively

consistently across a range of settings (Mazzucchelli, 2010; Reynolds, 2016), the actual mode of delivery can differ, and can be targeted to the specific needs of groups and individuals. For example, behavioural activation has proved successful in both group and individual settings and both a face-to-face and online delivery (Mazzucchelli, 2010; Reynolds, 2016). However, we wanted to explore what mode participants believed was likely to work best for *older adults*. Participants discussed the possibility of holding the program in group or individual modes, with several participants concluding that they themselves would prefer the group setting.

> *"Male 1: e-everyone has a different set of skills*
> *Woman 4: in a combined, we're, we're so different in what we do but we*
> *wor- it's great when you get together-*
> *Woman 1: creates electricity?*
> *Woman 4: So I love that, sort of that group as you said you like a group or*
> *individual, I, I would love a group approach*
> *…*
> *Woman 4: there's huge wisdom in a group that-*
> *Woman 1: but you learn off of each other too*
> *Male 2: oh yeah*
> *Woman 4: you feed off each other and and they'll all contribute…"*

The discussion from focus group 4 illustrates that participants believe the value of using a group setting lies in interpersonal engagement and learning. This is consistent with literature identifying benefits of group therapy including interpersonal learning, engagement, and group members taking on a co-therapist role (Tucker, & Oei, 2007). However, participants also noted that a group approach might not work for everyone. For example, those with functional limitations who find it difficult to leave home, or those more socially anxious may prefer an individual setting.

There was discussion around whether the program could be administrated online or face-to-face, with participants generally indicating a preference for face-to-face delivery. Reynolds et al. (2016) suggested that there is no social accountability with online therapies, thereby reducing treatment adherence. The participants in our study were also concerned

that treatment adherence would be reduced because there was no in person facilitator monitoring adherence. For example,

> *"The person can say yes I am having a wonderful time when in actual fact they might still be sitting at home feeling very miserable and the buddy doesn't know this because there is no face to face contact." Woman 1 (FG 3)*

Participants in our study also reported simply having a preference for face-to-face communication over other modes, with one woman stating *"I think it's kind of a furphy that even emails is communicating."* (Woman 1, FG 3). Furthermore, participants also discussed privacy concerns and underdeveloped technological skill as reasons against delivering the activity intervention online, echoing previous research with older adults assessing the feasibility of online treatment (Haesner, O'Sullivan, Govercin, & Steinhagen-Thiessen,. 2015).

> *"It's a privacy issue for me as well because this is about things that I care about and about me and, and I don't want that on the internet." Woman 5 (FG 3)*

> *"I suppose not yet…I suppose we reasonably handle [the internet] but you are not born with it." Male 2 (FG 3)*

While participants did make it clear that face-to-face behavioural activation may be best for their cohort, they did suggest that follow-up monitoring could be made over the phone or via email.

Facilitator characteristics.

Another theme related to the practicalities of behavioural activation concerned facilitator characteristics. Therapeutic alliance has been broadly defined as the bond between therapist and client. Studies show that across a range of therapies better therapeutic alliance results in better outcomes for clients (Martin, Garske, & Davis, 2000). Indeed, participants reported that what was fundamental for the success of this activity intervention was that the facilitator builds a relationship and develops trust with the client.

"Woman 12: yeah, but I think you have to start with the relationship

Woman 1: yes, yes

Woman 12: if you walked into someone's home,

Woman: yes, yes, trust

Woman 12: you'd have to build a relationship with them, and if you

couldn't, you'd send someone else who could" (FG 2)

As well as building a relationship, participants agreed that the facilitator required a level of skill both in implementing behavioural activation but also interpersonal skills to engage the disengaged. Indeed, research shows that interpersonal skills are positively related to client outcomes (Anderson, Ogles, Patterson, Lambert, & Vermeersch, 2009). Participants suggested that therapy-specific skills could be achieved through training in behavioural activation. A strength of behavioural activation is that it does not require complex skill from the facilitator, making training relatively quick (Lejuez et al., 2001) and can be administered by lay counsellors (Patel et al., 2016). Finally, there was no clear consensus among participants on whether the age of the facilitator would be important for the success. However, it was generally acknowledged that the facilitator would need appropriate skills, and that preferences around the age of the facilitator could vary from person to person.

Perceived challenges to implementation

Another theme that emerged related to concerns surrounding the practicalities of implementing a behavioural activation-based activity intervention. Participants were also concerned with the cost of rolling out an activity intervention on a large scale. While rolling out any intervention costs financially, behavioural activation is relatively cost effective (Richards et al., 2016). This is because behavioural activation does not require professionals to administer the program (Patel et al., 2016), training is inexpensive, and the program can be administered in group settings (Richards et al., 2016; Mazzucchelli, 2010).

Another common concern raised by participants was how disengaged older adults would be identified and recruited to the program. The difficulty with recruiting 'hard-to-reach' populations is not new, with typical sampling and recruitment methods often failing (Bonevski

et al., 2014; Shaghaghi, Bhopal, & Sheikh, 2011). Bonevski et al. (2014) recently reviewed a range of studies that have explored strategies for accessing, recruiting and retaining hard-to-reach populations. The authors concluded that multiple barriers present when engaging with these populations and therefore a comprehensive recruitment plan that employs multiple strategies to overcome barriers at each stage of the recruitment process is required. One overarching strategy of particular relevance was collaborating with community organisations and facilities that have access to these populations. These organisations not only provide a stage for sampling and recruitment through having access to the target population, but can also make suggestions regarding how best to encourage recruitment and retention. Participants also suggested recruiting through medical centres because it is a service that most disengaged and isolated older adults visit, aligning with Bonevski's (2014) and Shaghaghi et al.'s (2011) suggestion to recruit through facilities that have access to hard-to-reach populations.

5.2.3 Behavioural activation for transitional periods.

Transitional periods, such as retirement, losing a spouse or a chronic illness diagnosis, were recognised as posing potential threats to engagement. Furthermore, participants commonly discussed planning for their own retirement by exploring activity options for late life, setting up financially, and engaging with programs, such as retirement planning from Relationships Australia. Given a level of reflection on their own experiences, it is perhaps unsurprising that some participants identified behavioural activation-based approaches as potentially having particular promise if applied as a means of maintaining continuity of activity when negotiating major life transitions. For example, when planning for retirement, behavioural activation-based interventions could help those at risk of role losses to plan for behaviour consistent activities.

6. Summary and Conclusions

This study represents a first step in designing a behavioural activation-based activity intervention for older adults. We explored participants' experiences and views regarding their

own late life engagement and whether they saw behavioural activation as an appropriate approach to creating a new activity program for older adults.

Most of our participants reported engaging in a range of activities, with motivations for engagement including a desire to contribute to the community, goals around self-development and lifelong learning, and an awareness of the importance of fostering and maintaining social connections. Identified barriers to engagement included factors internal (e.g., declining health, personality, self-confidence) and external (e.g., ageist attitudes, death of network members, caring responsibilities) to the individual, and participants described processes of adaptation that they had successfully used when faced with barriers to valued activities.

After the principles and practices characterising behavioural activation were explained to focus group participants, the general consensus was that it represented a promising approach. Participants were particularly positive about the emphasis of the approach on promoting values-consistent activity likely to engender a sense of meaning. However, the discussion also resulted in identification of potential barriers to implementation that will be important to consider in moving the project forward. These challenges included how to reach and recruit disengaged and isolated older adults in the community, the importance of ensuring that program facilitators possess the right skills and attributes, and the fact that some older adults may have no interest in increasing their levels of engagement with life, and that this should be respected.

6.1 Recommendations

Based on the key focus group findings reported above, we derived the following recommendations as a basis for informing the design phase of an activity program:

1. The principles of behavioural activation represent a conceptual and practice-based foundation for promoting late life activity engagement that is likely to be acceptable to many older adults

2. In planning a behavioural activation-focused approach to activity intervention, the research team should consider the feasibility of combining individual and group-based modes of delivery within a single protocol

3. The research team should explore the utility of pre-emptive "early-intervention" approaches designed to promote sustained and ongoing engagement across significant life transitions such as retirement from work and widowhood.

4. Approaches to promoting engagement are likely to be more effective if incorporating a proximal human element (i.e., face-to-face facilitation) rather than more distal facilitator engagement (e.g., online or self-directed provision of support/facilitation).

5. Addressing ageist attitudes in the community represents an important goal as part of broader efforts to enhance older adults' participation and to foster intergenerational connections

6. Care should be taken in recruiting activity program facilitators to ensure they have the appropriate interpersonal skills to maximise success of the program and participant adherence

7. As a potentially "hard-to-reach" population, efforts to recruit isolated or disengaged older adults into an activity program trial should be underpinned by a comprehensive recruitment plan employing multiple strategies.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Development of a Comprehensive Activities List and Taxonomy

A central process in behavioural activation approaches involves working with clients to help identify their central values (see below for examples) and possible activities that align with these values (i.e., *value consistent activities*). Sometimes clients may struggle to generate their own ideas for value consistent activities. With this in mind, one aim of the present project was to develop, a resource that could be used to generate ideas for activities that might be undertaken locally, and that could be incorporated within a behavioural activation-based approach to promoting activity engagement among older adults. Rather than creating a long and unstructured list of activities, we organised the activities in a way that linked them with an identified set of values from the literature (Lejuez et al., 2001; Mazzucchelli, 2010). Furthermore, activities require different types of resources, some of which can change with age (e.g. physical ability). Therefore, we wanted to flag activities that were likely to require certain resources, to help clients and facilitators plan most effectively in scheduling activities. Appendix A provides an overview of how the activity list (Appendix B) was generated.

Taxonomy

We used a pre-existing behavioural activation activities list created by Mazzucchelli (2010) as a starting point for the activities taxonomy. At its broadest level, the taxonomy is organised by life values, which are pre-determined areas that facilitators and clients work through during behavioural activation (Lejuez et al., 2001) and include *Relationships, Education/Career, Recreation/Leisure, Mind/Body/Spirituality, and Home making/home maintenance*. Within these 5 life areas, and at the second level of the taxonomy, are activity areas (e.g. *relaxing and solitude, religious, volunteer and help someone, and health* within the value *Mind/Body/Spirituality*). Within each activity area are more specific activities, representing the third level of the taxonomy. We identified and listed these specific activities by incorporating the activities in Mazzucchelli's (2010) original list, and comprehensive lists of activities derived from the Australian and American Time Use Surveys (Bureau of Labor

Statistics, 2016; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006), and the Meaningful Activity Participation Assessment (MAPA; Eakman, Carlson, & Clark, 2010). The MAPA measures the meaningfulness of activities and was developed in consultation with older adults. The Time Use Surveys record and classify activities that the population reports undertaking. Some of the activities from the Time Use Survey would not be objectively regarded as engaging (e.g., brushing one's teeth). Therefore, the researchers used their discretion along with the MAPA to identify activities from the Time Use Survey with the potential to engender a sense of meaning.

Organising specific activities under activity areas

Having identified a list of activities, the first author initially organised these according to the activity areas established by Mazzucchelli (2010). However, the process of incorporating and organising these specific activities from the Time Use Survey and MAPA helped refine the activity area labels. For example, Mazzucchelli originally labelled the activity area *Active Things and Games* within the life area *Recreation and Leisure*. However, numerous sports, exercise and outdoor activities fit under this heading. The Australian Time Use Survey organises sports and outdoors activities by whether they are a. sports, b. exercise activities, or c. outdoor activities that require less physical activity. We therefore developed the activity area E*xercise and Outdoors* to replace Mazzucchelli's *Active Things and Games*, and within *Exercise and Outdoors* organised activities by whether they were exercise and sports or non-sport outdoors activities requiring less physical activity.

After the first author finalised the activity areas and specific activities, two 3rd year Psychology work experiences students independently organised the activities within the taxonomy template (See Appendix D for the instructions given to students). The purpose of this exercise was to highlight any problems and inconsistencies. For example, the life area N*on-physical Games and Audio/visual* was originally called *Games and Audio/visual*. However, *games* were interpreted as both non-physical (e.g. cards) and sports (e.g., golf). We therefore clarified this label and called it *Non-physical* Games and Audio/visual.

Coding for resources

To help older adults choose and plan for activities, we wanted to highlight those activities that require transportation, financial and physical resources. To do this, the researchers developed coding guidelines for each resource (See Appendix D) and then the first author and the two 3rd year Psychology work experience students independently coded each activity using these guidelines. When all 3 coders did not agree on the resources required for a particular activity, the second author finalised the coding.

Solitary vs social activity

One of the goals of a proposed person-centred approach to promoting activity engagement is to provide a flexible means of delivery that can accommodate participants with a wide range of resources and abilities. Recognising that some older adults may not have ready access to social networks, or may prefer to engage with activities in solitude, we also identified activities that could be performed alone (Tornstam, 1999).

Listing organisations and groups with activities

Finally, we generated examples of organisations and groups in the community who provide opportunities for engagement in a number of the activities listed in the taxonomy (Appendix C). This will ultimately provide a practical means for directly linking older adults with opportunities for engagement. The researchers consulted the websites Our Community (www.ourcommunity.com.au) and SA Community (www http://sacommunity.org/thesaurus/14865-) and the search engine Google to identify relevant organisations and groups.

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Appendix B

Activity List and Taxonomy

Required resources: T = transport, F = Finance, P = Physical

Can the activity be completed in solitude? S = Solitary

Relationships

- Give and receive physical affection
- Go through old photos with children and grandchildren.
- Hug your favourite person
- Reminisce, talk about old times
- Phone a friend
- Play with your grandchildren
- Visit a neighbour
- Give someone a facial or massage (P)
- Do favours for others (T)
- Buy or make a present for someone
- Have a frank and open conversation
- Invite friends over for a video and popcorn
- Eat out with friends or associates (F T)
- Visit friends or have friends visit (T)
- Prepare a special meal for friends or family (F)
- Get together with friends (T)
- Have family visit or visit family (T)
- Write a letter to a friend (S)
- Help or counsel someone
- Hold a Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary or charades evening (F)
- Give a gift (S F)
- Discuss a topic of interest
- Attend a social connections program (T)
- Go to or give a party (F T)
- Join a senior citizens club (T)
- Participate in an activity with family or friends (Look at *Recreation and Leisure* for some ideas)

Education/Career

Career

- Apply for a job (T)
- Use a hobby to make extra money (F S T)
- Work on financial management (S)

Education

- Learn something new (Look in *Creativity, non-sport games and audio/visual, and Exercise and Outdoors for ideas*) (F S)
- Take a course on something of interest (S)
- Read a "How to do it" book or article (S)
- Go back to school (F T)
- Go to a lecture or listen to a speaker of interest (S)
- Choose someone whose wisdom or knowledge you admire and read his or her book (S)
- Read an interesting non-fiction book (S)
- Read a good novel (S)
- Visit a historic site (S T)
- Listen to an audio book (S)
- Discuss a topic of interest (sports, fashion, politics, news)
- Work on financial management (S)
- Visit the art gallery (F S T)
- Visit the museum (F S T)
- Go to the library (S T)
- Read sacred works (S)
- Research your family tree (S)

Recreation/leisure

Arts and cultural activities

- Go to a play, ballet, opera, musical or comedy show (F S T)
- Visit the art gallery
- Visit the museum (F S T)
- Attend a festival (S T)
- Visit a historic site (S T)
- Visit a bookshop (S T)
- Go to a fair, carnival, circus or amusement park (F P S T)
- See your favourite band (F S T)
- Visit the zoo (F P S T)
- Attend a poetry reading (S T)
- Attend a book signing (S T)
- Go to a sporting event (F S T)
- Visit a car show (S T)
- Go to the library (S T)
- Go to a lecture or listen to a speaker of interest (S)
- Go to a movie (F S T)
- Go to an outdoor market or garage sale (S T)
- Ride on an aeroplane, hot air balloon or helicopter (F P S T)
- Go to your favourite restaurant (F S T)

Creativity

- Do some woodwork or carpentry (F P S T)
- Learn something new (e.g., a language) (F S)
- Learn to or go dancing (F P S T)
- Collecting e.g. stamps (F S)
- Learn or practise a musical instrument (F S)
- Scrapbooking (F S)
- Use a hobby to make extra money. (F S T)
- Learn or do something artistic (e.g., painting, pottery, crocheting) (F S)
- Sing (S)
- Write a story, novel, play, poetry, essay or report (S)
- Learn or do some photography (S)
- Dance to some music (P S)
- Read a "How to do it" book or article (S)
- Restore antiques or refinish furniture
- Buy or make a present for someone (F S)
- Read an interesting non-fiction book (S)
- Read a good novel (S)
- Listen to an audio book (S)

Non-physical games and audio/visual

- Play board games
- Do puzzles, crosswords, or brainteasers (S)
- Watch TV (S)
- Play a computer game (S)
- Play card games (e.g., patience)
- Listen to an audio book (S)
- Listen to the radio (S)
- Read an interesting non-fiction book (S)
- Read a "How to do it" book or article (S)
- Read a good novel (S)
- Choose someone whose wisdom or knowledge you admire and read their book (S)
- Invite friends over for a video and popcorn
- Hold a Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary or charades evening (F)
- Dance to some music (P S)
- Sing (S)
- Go to a movie (F S T)
- See your favourite band (F S T)
- Play pool or billiards
- Watch a game of sport (S)
- Play a game of darts (S)
- Listen to a religious podcast (S)

Traveling

- Take a road trip-go out to the country (F S T)

- Stay in a hotel or bed and breakfast (F S T)
- Plan an overseas or interstate trip (F P S T)
- Ride on an aeroplane, hot air balloon or helicopter (F P S T)

Exercise and outdoors

Sports and exercise
  o Water aerobics (F P S T)
  o Do some martial arts (P S)
  o Do some Tai chi (P S)
  o Go rock climbing (F P S T)
  o Join a fitness group (P T)
  o Pilates (P S)
  o Yoga (P S)
  o Stretch (P S)
  o Run up and down stairs for a few minutes (P S)
  o Do some weight lifting (P S)
  o Do some aerobics (F P S)
  o Go running or jogging (P S)
  o Learn to or go dancing (F P S T)
  o Go surfing (P S T)
  o Join an orienteering club (P T)
  o Horseback riding (F P S T)
  o Go fishing (F P S T)
  o Go boating (canoeing, kayaking, sailing) (F P S T)
  o Play lawn sports (e.g., bowls, croquet) (P T)
  o Have a game of golf (F P S T)
  o Hire a bike (F P S T)
  o Go roller skating (P S)
  o Play a game of racquet sports (e.g., tennis, squash, handball) (F P T)
  o Go rock climbing (F P S T)
  o Arrange a game of tennis or squash (P T)
  o Go for a swim (F P S T)
  o Do some martial arts (P S)
  o Do some Tai chi (P S)
  o Play ping-pong or table tennis (P S)
  o Go snorkelling, or scuba diving (F P T)
  o Indoor bowling (F P T)
  o Hire a tandem bike (F P T)

Non-sports outdoors (that do not necessarily require intense physical activity)
  o Breathe fresh air (S)
  o Fly a kite (S)
  o Walk on the beach (P S T)
  o Guided nature walk (P T)
  o Take the dog for a walk (P S)
  o Sit in the sun (S)
  o Go on a picnic (S T)
  o Go to the beach (S T)
  o Go for a stroll, brisk walk or bushwalk (P S)

- o Go bird-watching (P S T)
  - o Sit in your garden (S)
  - o Work in the yard—gardening, landscaping (P S)

Mind/Body/Spirituality

Relaxing and solitude

- Yoga (P S)
- Stretch
- Sit in the sun (S)
- Breathe fresh air (S)
- Sit in your garden (S)
- Have a bubble bath (S)
- Meditate (S)
- Have a massage (F S)
- Be alone (S)
- Go to the beach (S T)
- Take the dog for a walk (P S)
- Pray (S)
- Watch TV (S)
- Pilates (P S)
- Fly a kite (S)
- Scrapbooking (F S)
- Go on a picnic
- Do some Tai chi (P S)
- Go for a stroll, brisk walk or bushwalk
- Walk on the beach (P S T)
- Go for a swim (F P S T)
- Go bird watching (P S T)
- Read an interesting non-fiction book (S)
- Go surfing (P S T)
- Go to a movie (F S T)
- Invite friends over for a video and popcorn
- Read a "How to do it" book or article (S)
- Do puzzles, crosswords, or brainteasers (S)
- Stay at a hotel or bed and breakfast (F S T)
- Read a good novel (S)
- Write a story, novel, play poetry, essay or report
- Listen to an audio book (S)
- Dance to some music (P S)
- Research your family tree (S)
- Sing (S)

Religious
- Listen to a religious podcast (S)

- Pray (S)
- Participate in a church fellowship (T)
- Join a prayer or spiritual group (T)
- Make contributions to religious, charitable or other groups (F)
- Read sacred works (S)
- Go to a place of worship (S T)
- Do some charity work (P T)
- Attend a wedding, religious ceremony or function (T)
- Yoga (P S)

Volunteer and help someone
- Volunteer for a special cause (T)
- Help or counsel someone
- Make contributions to religious, charitable or other groups (F)
- Do favours for others (T)
- Defend or protect someone
- Do some charity work
- Give someone a facial or massage (P)

Health
- Meditate (S)
- Improve your health (have teeth fixed, new glasses or contacts, eating healthier, starting an exercise program) (F S T)
- Choose an activity from *Exercise and Outdoors*
- Have a massage

Home making/home maintenance

Interior

- Freshen up the house with potpourri (S)
- Re-arrange or redecorate a room or the house (P S)
- Have a big "spring-clean" (P S)
- Choose a household chore that you have not had time, or find difficult, to complete. (P S)
- Restore antiques or refinish furniture (F P S T)

Exterior
- Work in the yard—gardening, landscaping (P S)
- Tidy the shed (P S)
- Choose a household chore that you have not had time, or find difficult, to complete. (P S)

Household management

- Organise or commence personal services (e.g., cleaner, gardener) (F)
- Start recycling (S)
- Work on financial management (S)

Pet care

- Take the dog for a walk (P S)
- Play with your pets (S)

Appendix C

Examples of Organisations and Groups that Facilitate Access to Activities

Relationships

Senior Citizen's Clubs (To locate a Senior Citizen's Club within the client's living location, search http://sacommunity.org/thesaurus/14865-Senior_Citizens_Clubs).
Examples are provided below

Name	Contact details	What do they offer?
50 Plus Activity Club	Hill Recreation Centre Candy Rd, Happy Valley (08) 8387 2742 Email: wellybob1@dodo.com.au	Sports, games and singing/dancing
ACH Seniors on the Move	Aberfoyle Community Centre 1 Jessica St, Aberfoyle Park (08) 8270 5377	Social connection group designed for isolated older adults
Active Elders Association Inc	Active Elders Association Hall 27a Charles Street, Ascot Park (08) 8277 6096 Email: papeon6003@bigpond.com	Social groups for adults aged 50 and over (and people with disability)
Active Seniors at Bower	Bower Cottages Community Centre 200 Bower Road, Semaphore Park (08) 8408 1395	Recreation activities for adults aged 50+
Athelstone Senior Citizens Club	Athelstone Community Centre	Games and outings

Name	Contact details	What do they offer?
	Gorge Rd & Maryvale Rd Athelstone (08) 8263 1126	
Blackwood Over 50s Club	Blackwood Community Centre 4 Young St Blackwood (08) 8298 8109 Email: bobandnancy@dodo.com.au	Outings, lunch and games
Campbelltown Overs 50s Fun Club	Campbelltown Function Centre 172 Montacute Road, Rostrevor (08) 8336 8884	Social and health activities, and bowls

Social Connections

Examples of Social Connections groups that provide a range of activities to facilitate social engagement for older adults who may be isolated and/or older adults requiring care (therefore providing carers with respite).

Name	Contact Details	About
City of Onkaparinga **Social Connections Program**	Held around the City of Onkaparinga (08) 8301 7232 Email: socialsupport@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au Web: www.onkaparingacity.com	Short term support to help adults 65 years and over to improve their health and build social networks.
City of Onkaparinga Friendship Club	Wakefield House Positive Ageing Centre 65 Acre Ave, Morphett Vale (08) 8186 5501 Email: nicola.chadburn@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au	Low level respite for carers living within the City of Onkaparinga. My Aged Care referral required.

Name	Contact Details	About
	Web: www.onkaparingacity.com	
City of Onkaparinga Kookaburra Club	Elizabeth House 112 Elizabeth Rd, Christie Downs (08) 8186 6932 Web: www.onkaparingacity.com	Program to support social interaction and wellbeing. Offers monthly outings and a range of activities.
City of Burnside 3Rs (Respite, Recreation, Revitalisation)	(08) 8366 4144 Email: 3rs@burnside.sa.gov.au Web: www.burnside.sa.gov.au	Program to support social interaction and engagement in meaningful activities for isolated older adults, and to provide respite to carers.
City of Playford The Kookaburra Group and Malpa Group	John McVeity Centre 182 Peachey Road, Smithfield Plains (08) 8256 0355 or (08) 8256 0377 Email: playford@playford.sa.gov.au Web: www.playford.sa.gov.au	A range of activities to support social interaction and activity engagement. Must be over 65 and isolated. Participants determine the activities that are offered.

Education/Career

Career

Organisations that provide support for job seeking mature adults.

Name	Contact Details	About
Work Ready	WorkReady Department for Industry and Skills GPO Box 320 Adelaide SA 5001 1800 506 266 Web: www.skills.sa.gov.au	Government initiative to provide the training required for jobs. Adult community education (computer, home maintenance, English support, preparing for Ls, and budgeting) and career advice.
DOME Association Inc	Level 7 East – 50, Grenfell Street Adelaide (08) 8410 4344 Web: www.discoverdome.org.au	Job seeking service for adults aged 40+

Education

Examples of organisations that provide workshops and courses.

Name	Contact Details	About
University of the Third Age	Various locations across Adelaide and South Australia (e.g. Flinders University, Adelaide, Henley Beach) Secretary's PO Box: 76 Clare, SA 5453 Email: u3asouthaustralia@gmail.com Web: www.u3asouthaustralia.org.au	A range of courses lasting from one hour to a year for adults aged 50+ and retired. No qualification or certificates from courses.
Tafe SA	Locations across SA depending on course. Web: www.tafesa.edu.au Web for short courses: https://www.tafesa.edu.au/courses/short-courses	Offers a range of courses for employment and interest.

Name	Contact Details	About
COTA	Postal Address: GPO Box 1583, Adelaide SA 5001 (08) 8232 0422 Email: cotasa@cotasa.org.au Web: www.cotasa.org.au/default.aspx	Educational sessions on health and wellbeing for adults over 50 (e.g., driving, independence).
Art Gallery of South Australia	Art Gallery of South Australia North Terrace, Adelaide (08) 8207 7000 Web: www.artgallery.sa.gov.au	Range of guided tours, talks and workshops
The Adelaide Festival of Ideas	**7.1 PO Box 4145** **Norwood South PO,** **Norwood 5067 SA** **7.2 Email: info@adelaidefestivalofideas.com.au**	Over 3 days a range of speakers present their ideas in seminars. Speakers include politicians, scientists, philosophers, historians, architects, activists, economics and theologians.

Recreation/leisure

Arts and cultural activities

Examples of organisations that provide opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities. Check the websites Adelaide Theatre Guide (www.theatreguide.com) and Ticketek (http://premier.ticketek.com.au/default.aspx) for current shows (e.g. comedy, theatre, dance, opera etc).

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
Gallery One	1 Torrens Street Mitcham SA 5062 (08) 8272 4504 Web: www.galleryone.org.au	Art Gallery
Hahndorf Academy	68 Main St Hahndorf SA 5245 (08) 8388 7250 Web: www.hahndorfacademy.org.au	Art Gallery
Glenelg Art Gallery – Aboriginal Art	Ground Floor, Stamford Grand Hotel Moseley Square & St Johns Row Glenelg 0410 481 237 Web: www.glenelgartgallery.com.au/	Art Gallery
Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre	Lion Arts Centre North Terrace, Adelaide (08) 8212 4276 Web: www.nexusarts.org.au	Art Gallery
Tandanya	National Aboriginal Cultural Institute 253 Grenfell Street, Adelaide (08) 8244 3200 Web: www.tandanya.com.au	Art Gallery
Regional performances **Co-Opera**	10 Sean Court, Coromandel Valley (08) 8270 4400	Opera

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
	Web: www.co-opera.com.au/events	
State Opera of South Australia	216 Marion Road, Netley (08) 8226 4790 Web: www.saopera.sa.gov.au	Opera
Adelaide Zoo	Frome Road, Adelaide (08) 8267 3255 Web: www.adelaidezoo.com.au	Zoo
Cleland Wildlife Park	365 Mount Lofty Summit Road, Crafers (08) 8339 2444 Email: clelandwildlifepark@sa.gov.au Web: www.clelandwildlifepark.sa.gov.au	Zoo
The Adelaide Repertory Theatre Inc	53 Angas Street, Adelaide (08) 8212 5777 Web: www.adelaiderep.com	Theatre
State Theatre Company	Lion Arts Centre North Terrace, Adelaide (08) 8415 5333	Theatre
Adelaide Festival Centre	King William Street, Adelaide GPO Box 1269, Adelaide 5001 (08) 8216 8600 Web: www.adelaidefestivalcentre.com.au	Festival

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
Australian Dance Theatre	126 Belair Road Hawthorn 5062 (08) 8373 7733 Web: www.adt.org.au	Dance
The Australian Ballet	PO Box 838 South Melbourne VIC 3205 Web: www.australianballet.com.au	Dance
Glenelg Historical Society Inc	PO Box 1047 Glenelg South SA 5045 (08) 8294 0347 Web: www.glenelghistoricalsociety.websyte.com.au	Historic Sites
Hahndorf Academy – German Migration Museum	68 Main St Hahndorf SA 5245 (08) 8388 7250 Web: www.hahndorfacademy.org.au	Historic Sites
National Military Vehicle Museum	58 Anderson Ave., Port Noarlunga SA 5167 (08) 83841695 Web: www.military-vehicle-museum.org.au	Historic Sites
Mount Lofty Historical Society	Coventry Library 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling (08) 8339 8236 Web: www.mtloftyhistoricalsociety.wordpress.com	Historic Sites

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
South Australian Museum	North Terrace, Adelaide (08) 8207 7500 Web: www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/	Historic Sites
Adelaide Festival	(08) 8216 4444 Email: info@adelaidefestival.com.au Web: www.adelaidefestival.com.au	Festival. Range of arts, e.g., theatre, opera, music, dance, art, installations. Usually held during March.
Adelaide Fringe Festival	136 Frome St, Adelaide (08) 8100 2000 Email: buzz@adelaidefringe.com.au Web: www.adelaidefringe.com.au/	Festival. Range of shows and events. Usually mid-February to mid-March
OZ Asia	GPO Box 1269 Adelaide 5001 (08) 8216 8600 Web: http://www.ozasiafestival.com.au/	Festival. Dance, theatre, dance, music, food, film, talks and art. Usually held during October and November.
Adelaide Comedy	131 Pirie St Adelaide, South Australia 0402 222 899 Web: www.adelaidecomedy.com/	Range of Comedy shows. Often at the Marion Hotel, Arkaba, and Rhino Room.
Adelaide Writers Week	Affiliated with Adelaide Festival (08) 8216 4444 Email: info@adelaidefestival.com.au Web: www.adelaidefestival.com.au	Includes presentations by authors, book signings and poetry readings. Usually held in March.
Friendly Street Poets	The Box Factory 59 Regent Street, Adelaide. PO Box 3697 Norwood SA 5067	Monthly open mic poetry reading.

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
	Web: www.friendlystreetpoets.org.au	
Brighton Sunday Markets	Brighton Secondary School 305 Brighton Road, North Brighton (08) 8375 8215 Web: www.brightonsundaymarket.org	Markets
Farmers Market	Adelaide Showgrounds Leader Street, Wayville (08) 8231 8155 Email: admin@adelaidefarmersmarket.com.au Web: www.adelaidefarmersmarket.com.au	Markets
Marie Clark Musical Theatre (non-professional performances)	Salisbury Downs PO Box 602, Magill P: 8251 3926 E: tickets@marieclark.asn.au W: www.marieclark.asn.au/	Theatre

Creativity

Examples of organisations that provide opportunities to participate in creative activities.

Name	Contact details	Activity Type
Coast and Vines Music Club	10 Tangier Blvd Sellicks Beach SA 5174 0424 505 374	Music Club
Hahndorf Town Band	15 Balhannah Road Hahndorf SA 5245	Band

Name	Contact details	Activity Type
	(08) 8338 2771 Web: www.hahndorftownband.org	
Glenelg Art Gallery – Didgeridoo Lessons	Ground Floor, Stamford Grand Hotel Moseley Square & St Johns Row, Glenelg 0410 481 237 Web: www.glenelgartgallery.com.au	Music Lesson
Metropolitan Male Choir	Highgate SA (08) 8762 4420 Web: www.mmcsa.org	Choir
Mitcham City Brass	2 Flagstaff Road Darlington SA 5047 P: 0411720183 http://www.mitchamcitybrass.org/	Brass band
Adelaide Harmony Choir	PO Box 937 Kent Town, 5071 Email: adelaideharmonychoir.info@gmail.com Web: www.adelaideharmonychoir.org.au	Choir
Forte School of Music	Allenby Gardens, Black Forest and Morphett Vale Forte National Office PO Box 507, Kenmore 4069 Allenby Gardens: (08) 8346 5462 Black Forest (08) 8293 7265 Morphett Vale (08) 8186 3933 Web: https://fortemusic.com.au/music-classes-for-adults	Adult music lessons (piano, guitar, vocal, drums, flute, saxophone, clarinet and violin).
Guildhouse – Centre for Contemporary Craft and Design	Lion Arts Centre Corner North Terrace and Morphett Street (08) 8410 1822 Web: www.guildhouse.org.au	Art workshops
Gallery One	1 Torrens Street Mitcham SA 5062 (08) 8272 4504 Web: www.galleryone.org.au	Classes and workshops

Name	Contact details	Activity Type
Glenelg Art Gallery – Aboriginal Art	Ground Floor, Stamford Grand Hotel Moseley Square & St Johns Row, Glenelg 0410 481 237 Web: www.glenelgartgallery.com.au	Art lessons
Church of Christ **Triple C Community Craft**	165 Beach Road, Christie Downs (08) 83261153	Craft
Woodgroup SA Inc	Various locations across Adelaide Web: www.woodgroupsa.org.au	Woodwork
Noarlunga and Southern District Camera Club	Arts Centre 22 Gawler Street, Port Noarlunga (08) 8326 5577	Camera Club
Writers SA	Institute, North Terrace & Kintore Ave, Adelaide SA 5000 (08) 8223 7662 Web: www.writerssa.org.au	Writing workshops and groups
Move Through Life	Clarence Park, Glengowrie, Seacliffe, Henley Beach and Crafers locations 0408 240 772 Web: www.mtl-dancestudio.com.au	Dances classes (range of dance styles and mature dance)

Exercise and outdoors

Examples of organisations and groups that provide opportunities to participate in sports, outdoors activities and exercise.

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
Fitness in the Park	North Adelaide Gym and Fitness Centre 64 Mackinnon Parade, North Adelaide (08) 8267 1887 Web: www.fitnessonthepark.com.au/index.php	Pilates, circuits, strength, yoga, walking, dancing, aqua

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
City of Onkaparinga Over 50s Health and Fitness Club	Noarlunga Acquatics Centre, Seaman Rd, Noarlunga Wakefield House, Acre Ave, Morphett Vale (08) 8384 1144 Web: www.noarlungalc.com.au	Health and fitness
Tennis Senior SA	Social Mixed: South parklands (off Greenhill Road) Monday night Barbara Mathews (0439 816 678) or Ian Delbridge (0402 362 011) Wednesday night, Friday morning (Bob May 0439 377 013). Web: www.tennisseniors.org.au/sa/index.htm	Competition and Social Tennis
South Australian Masters Squash Association	2a Midera Avenue, Edwardstown, SA 5039 (08) 8276 8340 Web: www.sams.asn.au	Squash (Casual court hire as well as over 30s competitive group)
Glenelg Golf Club	James Melrose Road, Novar Gardens (08) 8350 3200 Web: www.glenelggolf.com/cms/	Golf
South Australian Recreational Cycling Club	Web: sarcc.wordpress.com	Cycling Club
Heart Foundation Walking	155-159 Hutt Street, Adelaide SA 5000 (08) 8224 2888 Web: www.walking.heartfoundation.org.au	Over 50s and all fitness levels

Name	Contact Details	Activity Type
Brighton Bowling Club	14 Keelara Street, Hove (08) 8296 6818	Lawn bowls (Social games and competitive)
SA Aquatic Centre	443 Morphett Road, Oaklands Park (08) 8198 0198 Web: www.saaquatic.ymca.org.au	Gym, pool and adult swimming lessons
Goodlife Active Adults	1202 Old Port Road (08) 8241 0444 Web: https://www.goodlifehealthclubs.com.au/classes/active-adults/	Goodlife Health clubs provides Active Adults at the Royal Park Goodlife Gym. These are group cardio and strength classes for older adults.
Playford Bowling Club Inc.	PO Box 34, Elizabeth South Australia, 5112 (08) 08 8254 1892 Email: playfordbc@gmail.com Web: www.playfordbowlingclub.com.au	Lawn bowls

Mind/Body/Spirituality

Volunteer and help someone

Name	Contact Details	About
Volunteering SA	Head Office Level 5/182 Victoria Square Adelaide SA 5000 08 8221 7177 Web: www.volunteeringsa-nt.org.au	Find current volunteering positions in South Australia. Also provide information sessions for potential volunteers, resources, training and referral services.

Name	Contact Details	About
Go Volunteer	Web: www.govolunteer.com.au	Website created by Volunteer Australia to help connect potential volunteers with volunteer positions.
Directory of Churches, Temples and Mosques in South Australia	https://www.yellowpages.com.au/sa/churches-temples-mosques-22810-category-a1	Worship and fellowship

Behavioural Activation Activities List

Brief background

Behaviour activation (BA) is the behavioural component of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and it aims at increasing engagement in the activities that clients value and enjoy (Lejuez, Hopko, Acierno, Daughters, & Pagoto, 2011; Mazzucchelli, 2010). While BA was initially developed to treat depression, it is also an effective tool for increasing psychological wellbeing (Mazzucchelli, 2010). However, no studies have tested whether BA can increase psychological wellbeing in older populations. Tim is currently taking first steps towards developing a study that extends BA to older adults, and one of these first steps involves preparing an activities list that is suitable for older adults.

To increase the engagement in valued activities, clients need to select activities from valued life areas. Tim anticipates that some older adults may struggle to generate activity ideas therefore we have developed an activities list. Because of the length, we need to organise the activities within an appropriate taxonomy. This taxonomy should hopefully make the list easier to navigate for the therapist.

Task 1. Organising activities under activity areas.

The taxonomy, at the broadest level, consists of 5 values (Relationships, Education/Career, Recreation/Leisure, Mind/Body/Spirituality, and Home making/home maintenance). Within these 5 values are activity areas, written out below.

1. Relationships	2. Education/ Career	3. Recreation/leisure	4. Mind/Body/ Spirituality

• **Informal socialising**
 • **Social events**
	• **Education**
	 • **Career**
		• **Arts and cultural activities**
		 • **Hobbies and creativity**
		 • **Games and audio/visual**
		 • **Traveling**
		 • **Exercise and outdoors**
		     ○ **Gym activities**
		     ○ **Sports and outdoors**
			• **Relaxing and thinking**
			 • **Religious activities**
			 • **Volunteering and helping someone**
			 • **Health**

5. Home making/
home maintenance
- **Interior**
- **Exterior**
- **Household management**
- **Pet care**

Your job is to slot activities under appropriate activity areas (i.e., under the dot points). For example, you might put the activity *phone a friend* under the activity area *Informal Socialising*. Some activities may fit under more than one activity area. For example, *yoga* might fit under *gym activities, sports and outdoors, and relaxing and thinking*. If you think an activity fits under more than one activity area, please put the activity under *all* relevant activity areas. The individual activities are in the document, titled *Activities,* and the taxonomy template is titled *Taxonomy*.

Task 2. Coding activities that are high in resources

To help older adults choose and plan for activities, we need to flag those that require certain resources. Your job will be to code each activity, in the document titled Activities, using the following guidelines.

Solitary activities v. social activities

For older adults who prefer to complete activities alone, we want to flag activities that can be completed alone and do not require social interaction with a partner or group. The guidelines for coding an activity as solitary are:

- The activity can be completed without the presence of a group or partner (e.g., meditation).

OR

- The activity can be or is usually completed with others, but there is the option to attend this activity alone. For example, visiting the cinema is usually a social activity but an individual can attend this activity alone.

    OR

- The activity is completed around others, but does not require social interaction with the group. For example, visiting the cinema is completed with an audience, but social interaction with the audience is not required for the completion of the activity.

Finance

For older adults with low income, we want to flag activities that always cost money. Therefore, code activities as requiring financial resources when

- The activity can reasonably be regarded as *always* requiring financial resources.

Transport

For older adults who struggle with transport options, we want to flag activities that require transport (i.e., a car or public transport). Code activities as requiring transport resources when:

- The activity most probably requires leaving the house or neighbourhood (i.e., is likely outside easy walking distance).

- Preparation for the activity most likely requires leaving the house or neighbourhood (e.g., doing some woodwork can be completed at home, but buying the materials requires travel).

Physical mobility

To help those with physical mobility limitations, we want to flag activities that require a certain level of physical mobility. Johnson and Wolinksy (1993) used the following items to measure lower body limitations:

- Lift 11kg
- Climb 10 steps
- Stand for 2 hours
- Kneel/stoop
- Walk .4km

Flag activities that would be difficult for someone with one or more of the above limitations.

Thank you for helping us with this project. We really appreciate your input!

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