

December 27, 2016

Final Report: Wisdom and Maturity  
Cathy Cook, Program Coordinator

On December 13, 2016, ten participants who have participated in the Wisdom in Maturity program at the Edgewater low-income Apartments were recognized for their commitment to their own personal growth and for their part in creating a community that more fully supports one another. The recognition was held at the Sizzler Restaurant, transportation was provided and each person was presented with a certificate, a journal and a bountiful lunch.

The themes of Wisdom In Maturity classes in 2015-2016 included:

- Reframing self-limiting beliefs and stereotypes to more positive and life-affirming ones.
- Accepting change, letting go, and working with fears when facing the impermanence of life.
- Creating daily practices for self-care, self-compassion, forgiveness and gratitude.
- Finding meaning from previous life experiences and integrating them into life going forward.
- Identifying the need to bring closure to unresolved wounds.
- Focusing on connection to shared humanity and reducing isolation from others.

Utilizing the materials of IONS Conscious Aging, *Fully Awake and Truly Alive* by Rev Jane Vennard, Gratitude Meditations by Deepak Chopra, and *How Did I Get to Be 70 When I Feel 35 Inside*, by Linda Douty, participants met with Wisdom in Maturity volunteers weekly for conversation circles which often included mandala coloring work.

In addition five of the participants completed a 15-hour Conscious Aging workshop series at First Methodist In October 2016.

Wisdom in Maturity is co-sponsoring a presentation of *Being Mortal* on January 14th, showing the film followed by facilitated discussion. Wisdom in Maturity participants are invited and have expressed that they will be attending.

The participants have asked for continuation of the program which meets the grant's goal of continuing community ministry, but there are a few obstacles to overcome. Because the grant created a partnership with LifeSteps at Edgewater, Wisdom in Maturity was allowed the use of the community space which will no longer be available. A partnership directly with a church is not an option. Meeting in an apartment space limits new participants, but may be a way to keep things going, Meeting off-site is another option to be considered but there are transportation needs.

Participants and volunteers will be in discussion in January 2017 about how best to continue Wisdom In Maturity. We are all filled with gratitude for what has been created and look forward to what will come forward as we continue to work and grow together.