



Facilitator Training

Ginny Thomas Healthy Aging Symposium

What Matters to Me: Shared Decisions in Health & Healing

Wednesday, October 7, 2026 | 2:00–5:00 PM (MT)

Pocatello • Meridian • Anchorage

The word 'ROAR' in a white, bold, sans-serif font, positioned on an orange triangular background that points towards the bottom-left corner of the slide.

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Thank
You!

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About the Symposium

- Held since 2008 and hosted by Idaho State University and Idaho AHEC
- Formerly known as the Thomas Geriatric Symposium, now the Healthy Aging Symposium
- Students learn with and from older adults, not just about them
- This year: more older adults than ever, in person at three sites
- Website: www.isu.edu/healthconf

2008

first symposium

3

sites, one afternoon

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This Year's Theme

*What Matters to Me:
Shared Decisions in Health & Healing*

1 Listen

Ask open questions and let the person tell their own story

2 Partner

Bring every profession's view to the person's goals

3 Decide together

Make decisions with the person, not for them

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Building on the 4Ms

- The 4Ms of Age-Friendly Health Systems: What Matters, Medication, Mind, and Mobility
- A theme at a previous symposium
- This year goes deeper into What Matters, the M that guides the other three



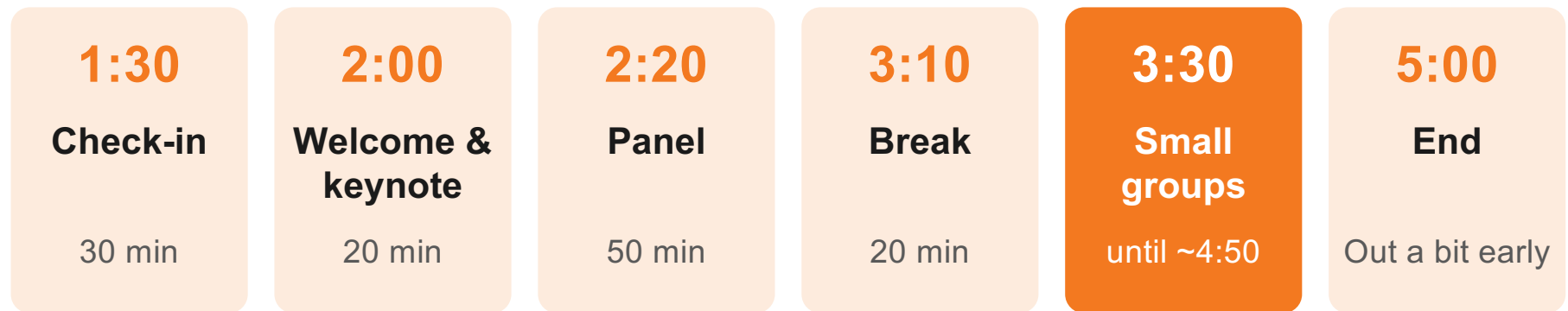
Three Sites, One Afternoon

Site	Location	Times
Pocatello	Pond Student Union Building, Wood River Room	Check-in 1:30 PM Program 2:00–5:00 PM (MT)
Meridian	White Cloud Auditorium, West Ada Training Center, 1303 E. Central Dr.	Check-in 1:30 PM Program 2:00–5:00 PM (MT)
Anchorage	UAA Lucy Cuddy Hall, 3400 Seawolf Dr.	Check-in 11:30 AM Program 12:00–3:00 PM (AKT)

All three sites run simultaneously on the same schedule. Anchorage is coordinated locally by Brandy Seignemartin.

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Flow of the Afternoon



Your main role: the 80-minute small group conversation, the heart of the afternoon

Anchorage: same flow, two hours earlier (12:00–3:00 PM Alaska time)



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Keynotes and Panels

Pocatello

Keynote: Matthew Overocker, BSN, RN, Idaho State Veterans Home

Panel: Tara Contreras (Senior Activity Center), Judy Liday (healthy ager, NKA), and John Holmes, PharmD

Meridian

Keynote: Dr. Michelle Christopher, palliative medicine physician

Panel: A chaplain, an elder law attorney, social workers, and Fred and Jan Turner (healthy agers)

One or two additional panelists are still being confirmed.

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Good to Know

- 1 Seating** Mixed professions; name tags handed out at check-in
- 2 Round tables** About 8 per table, with 1 to 3 older adults at each
- 3 Pocatello parking** Free at the ICCU Dome with a shuttle to the Student Union Building
- 4 Refreshments** Light refreshments at check-in and during the 3:10 break
- 5 Exhibitor tables** Community partners to visit at check-in and during the break

The Role of Older Adults

**More
Older
Adults**

- Full participants and conversation partners, not observers
- Experts in their own lives and health care experiences
- One to three at each table, alongside students from different professions
- Often the most memorable voices of the afternoon

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Your Role as Facilitator

These conversations often run themselves. You are there for the moments when they don't.

Host, not lecturer

Welcome people, read the ground rules, and get things started

Balance the voices

Draw out quieter voices; make sure different points of view are heard

Keep it moving

Use the packet prompts when things stall; nudge back on track

Watch the time

Move through the six steps and protect the closing

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The Small Group Case: 80 Minutes

Time	Step	Min
3:30	1. Getting to know each other	10
3:40	2. Your voice first (older adults share)	10
3:50	3. Meet Bob	15
4:05	4. The decision	20
4:25	5. Two weeks later	15
4:40	6. Closing and evaluations	10

At your table

- Paper copy of the case (at least one per table)
- Facilitator guide
- “What Matters to Me” cards

Near-final draft, posted on the website; minor edits possible before October 7

Walking Through the Case

Meet Bob, 74

- Retired shop teacher, lives alone
- Recovering from a mild stroke
- Wants to finish a toy chest for a new grandbaby

Step 2

Older adults share a time a health professional really listened, or didn't

Step 4

Going home: Bob wants his house and shop; his daughter is worried

Step 5

Two weeks later: a stopped medication, the truck, and a happier Bob



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Drawing Out Every Voice

When someone is quiet

- Invite by name, gently: “What’s your take?”
- Ask for experience, not expertise
- Accept a “pass” gracefully

When someone dominates

- Thank them, then turn: “Let’s hear from someone else”
- Go around the table
- Enlist them to help draw others in

When students go clinical

- Ask: “What would Bob say?”
- Turn to an older adult for their view
- Bring it back to what matters

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Handling Sensitive Moments

Personal stories

Older adults may share grief or hard experiences. Thank them and listen; don't probe.

Health questions

No personal medical advice. Suggest they write the question on their card for their own provider.

Choice

Sharing is always optional. Anyone may pass.

Distress

If someone is upset, let your site lead know.



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With Gratitude

Our partners

- AARP, a great sponsor
- Pocatello Senior Center
- New Knowledge Adventures

Our people

- Faculty and staff on all three campuses
- Healthy Aging Symposium planning committee

Our donors

- The generous donors who make this event possible

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Thank You

- You help create a rich, collaborative, intergenerational experience
- Guide the conversation, draw out voices, and keep the focus on what matters to the person
- Protect the closing: older adults share first
- Evaluations: REDCap QR code or paper copies

***What Matters
to Me***

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