



Visitors discuss portraits from the 2017 'Transformations through the Lens of Wellbeing' project. Photo: Corinne Adams, artist

Portraying wellness:

An invitation to participate in a virtual exhibit



Help your community residents or members 'redefine' wellness by taking part in a virtual portrait project aligned with Active Aging Week®. It's fun, budget-friendly and easy to do

by Lisa Kiely, BFA, CPT, CAD, CEHA

There's an African saying, "If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." In Atlanta, Georgia, active living fans are excited about a new

project connecting people of all ages and stages of life. Now, in time for Active Aging Week® 2019, we invite International Council on Active Aging® members and others hosting this campaign to join us in a virtual portrait project. [Ed. For more about Active Aging Week, see the article on pages 40–43.]

What is wellness in one word? Wellness means so many different things to different people. Our new nationwide project, "Wellness In One Word," challenges everyone to define wellness in the

moment by connecting it to self-portrait photography. We are inviting people to take portraits and “selfies” while answering the question, “What’s on your mind right now—in one word?” and to submit their photos for virtual display.

Trying to capture individual ideas about wellness in one word and one picture is a fun way to bring us together and see what gives us well-being. A virtual gallery is a visual representation of ideas from all over. Launching October 1, 2019, for Active Aging Week, the “Wellness In One Word” exhibit will continue until the end of the month.

Promoting participation

Wellness champions can encourage people to get involved in this project in all kinds of ways. They can begin with their own photo and word, inviting others to take part if they wish. Here are some ways to promote participation:

- hold photo parties
- plan wellness events that end with photo sessions
- provide impromptu studios where passersby can snap and post a selfie with their word (ask volunteers or staff to be on hand to help upload images)
- invite family, staff or volunteer photographers to join for community participation
- schedule times for individuals who want to participate to have their portrait taken in a “studio”
- invite family members and staff to participate on-site or at home
- post project information on bulletin boards

One way to gain greater participation is to help upload images of other participants. Also, printing and displaying photos on-site during Active Aging Week is a surefire way to encourage discussion and promote connections to wellness and with each other.

Exhibiting images

Images for the “Wellness In One Word” virtual gallery will be accepted between August 15 and September 16, 2019. Photos may be submitted to project sponsor

Monarch Collaborations via website (virtual gallery link), Facebook page, Instagram feed or email account. A link to Monarch’s website will also appear in “Tips from the field” on the Active Aging Week website. [Ed. The “Resources” sidebar on page 48 includes these channels.]

Each uploaded portrait must have a completed online release. The information requested includes the individual’s name, age, town, chosen word and gender (male, female, other). These details will allow sorting of the gallery images to highlight wellness dimensions by location, age, words or gender. Some information also may appear with any portraits published in the *Journal on Active Aging*®.

Building community

“Wellness In One Word” is an outgrowth of “Atlanta in 1000 Words,”

a snapshot of the city displaying 1,000 portraits. Both projects aim to capture how people feel in the moment. “Wellness In One Word” also will serve as a pilot for a public art installation sponsored by Atlanta Celebrates Photography (ACP) in partnership with Illuminate Atlanta for the 2020 ACP Festival. That installation will digitally display portraits on buildings and billboards, in addition to exhibitions in physical spaces.

Besides ICAA, Illuminate Atlanta and ACP’s cofounder Corinne Adams, Monarch Collaborations is working with partners Cowart and Decatur Family YMCA, Park Springs life-plan community and The Arches recovery residences to create these community-building opportunities. The idea for a large portrait initiative, for example, sprang from the excitement over Monarch’s 2017 col-

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What brings me joy:
The memories of
being with Frazier, my husband.

Photos: Corinne Adams, artist

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laboration with Adams, called “Transformations through the Lens of Well-being.” (The photos in this article give you a taste of the “Transformations” project. More information is available in the caption.)

“Wellness In One Word” activities can build momentum—and community—for Active Aging Week 2019, which will take place October 1–7. Help us champion participation in this virtual portrait project and build community from the outside in and the inside out. Let’s go far together!

For full instructions on how to participate in “Wellness In One Word,” visit the Monarch Collaborations website.

Lisa Kiely, BFA, CPT, CAD, CEHA, is associate executive director of Cowart Family YMCA and founder of Monarch Collaborations, both in Atlanta, Georgia. An ICAA Champion for the Changing the Way We Age® Campaign, Kiely has more than 25 years of experience in the field of gerontology. She previously worked as director of enrichment for Lenbrook life-plan community and consulted on retirement community life services and whole-person

wellness programs for Life Care Services (LCS) and its multiple senior living communities. During her tenure with LCS, she served as director of wellness and community life services for one of its largest continuing care retirement communities. Kiely holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in drawing and painting and a minor in gerontology. She is a certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor, certified activity director and certified Eden at Home associate. Kiely recently attained the Leadership in Wellness Management certificate through ICAA Education.



Resources

Active Aging Week: Tips from the field

https://www.activeagingweek.com/tips_from_the_field.php

Monarch Collaborations

Website: <http://www.monarchcollaborations.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MonarchCollaborations>

Instagram: @monarchcollaborations

Email: monarchcollaborations@gmail.com

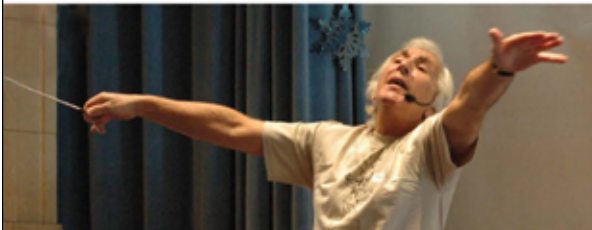


*important.
After immigrating to U.S.A I realized
how important family was to me.*
D. Cantwell

“Transformations through the Lens of Well-being” was a 2017 photographic collaboration that combined inpatient teenagers with serious illnesses at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and residents of Lenbrook life-plan community. Photo parties took place at both places. Enlarged portraits from each group were displayed at Woodruff Arts Center in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2017 during Active Aging Week® and The Atlanta Celebrates Photography Festival. A reception allowed the teens and the older adults to see the photos, read the stories and get to know each other. Images courtesy of Corinne Adams, artist



Photo: Corinne Adams, artist



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