CHAPTER 9
EVALUATION TOOLS

Program evaluation is important. The original LIFE Program used a variety of assessment tools to determine if changes in functional fitness, subjective well-being and physical activity readiness to change among participants (older adults) and aging perceptions among trainers (younger adults) occurred. A comprehensive list of the questionnaires used with the pilot LIFE Program is at the end of this chapter. The LIFE Program is intended to be user friendly for both those participating and those facilitating. For younger adult trainers, we recommend using the Fabroni Scale of Ageism, Expectations Regarding Aging scale, as well as a general program evaluation (Appendix D). For the participants, we used the modified Readiness to Change scale, Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale, Functional Activities Questionnaire, as well as assessments of self-efficacy and mental fatigue (Appendix E). These tools are simple to complete, do not require special training or equipment to administer and do not require a lot of time. Below is a brief explanation of each tool.

Fabroni Scale on Ageism (trainers):

The Fabroni Scale on Ageism is to be given to the younger adult trainers before they complete the self-study modules and again when the on-site program concludes (WEEK 8, DAY 2) to assess what changes may have occurred during their interaction with the older adult participants. It can also be given when the newsletter intervention is completed to examine if the changes were maintained and/or improved four months later. The 29 questions contained in the Fabroni Scale on Ageism are designed to assess the negative attitudes younger adults may have about older adults. It serves as a good tool to
assess if the intergenerational interaction was able to lessen the occurrence of ageist attitudes in younger adults.

**Expectations Regarding Aging (trainers):**

The 12-item Expectations Regarding Aging (ERA-12) is to be completed by the younger adult trainers prior to completing the self-study modules and again when the on-site program concludes (WEEK 8, DAY 2) to assess what changes may have occurred during their interaction with the older adult participants. It can also be given when the newsletter intervention is completed to determine if the changes were maintained and/or improved four months later. The ERA-12 is based on the comprehensive ERA-38 survey. The 12-item ERA measures expectations that individuals have about how their health and cognitive function will be when they age. This tool examines four areas: expectations regarding physical health, expectations regarding mental health, and expectations regarding cognitive function, and one global expectations regarding aging scale.

**Stages of Change (participants):**

The Readiness to Change for Physical Activity questionnaire was created and validated by the Cancer Prevention Research Center. This tool is quick to complete and helps determine where a person is in regards to their stage of change (explained in Chapter 1). Movement through the stages indicates the LIFE Program was successful. This survey should be given before the start of the program (WEEK 1, DAY 1), after the on-site program is done (WEEK 8, DAY 2) and after the newsletter intervention (WEEK 25). The definition for “regular physical activity” in the original questionnaire differs
from the recommendation of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). To make the two align, we have modified the questionnaire definition of regular physical activity to be “30 minutes at a time (or more) per day, and be done at least five days per week.” Additionally, in order to determine one’s stage of change we have added the statement “Mark yes to only ONE of the below questions”. This is to prevent participants from answering yes to more than one question. If you are more interested in learning if participants went from self-identifying as “inactive” to “active” using the aforementioned definition, you could use only Question 1: “Do you currently engage in regular physical activity?”

**PANAS (participants):**

The Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) is a 20-item questionnaire used to assess older adult participants’ self-reported feelings during the past few weeks. Respondents use a five-point scale to rate how often they have experienced a particular feeling or emotion.

**Self-efficacy (participants):**

Two scales are used to measure older adults’ self-efficacy or ability to complete exercise-related activities. First, nine questions are presented which prompt the respondent to indicate their confidence (0-100%) in being able to complete 5 to 45 minutes of physical activity or exercise. The second questionnaire presents 9 barriers to physical activity and exercise and requires respondents to indicate the self-reported
confidence on a scale of 1 to 10 to overcome each barrier in order to be able to exercise for 20 minutes, 3 days a week.

*Mental Fatigue (participants):*

Four items are used to gauge the ease of older adults’ concentration and attention. Respondents may agree, disagree, or remain neutral to the presented statements which reflect varying degrees of mental fatigue.

*Functional Activity Questionnaire (participants):*

The self-reported ability of older adult participants to engage in important everyday activities such as paying bills and preparing meals is assessed via the 10-item Functional Activities Questionnaire. Respondents choose ONE answer which best reflects his or her ability to carry out specific activities.

*LIFE Program Evaluations (all):*

The LIFE Program has three qualitative evaluation questionnaires: Participants (post and follow-up), Trainers (post and follow-up). These questionnaires ask why the person chose to participate in the LIFE Program, what they liked and disliked, likelihood of participating again, and any changes (positive or negative) they made as a result of the LIFE Program. The post evaluation for participants asks only about the on-site program under the direction of the trainer. The follow-up questionnaire includes questions about the LIFE Lessons newsletters and the experience with the on-site leader.
LIST AND REFERENCES OF LIFE PROGRAM PILOT STUDY ASSESSMENT TOOLS

LIFE Program General Questionnaire: The assessments consisted of a variety of validated research surveys. The name of these surveys and their references are listed below.


- **Physical activity staging questionnaire** (Cancer Prevention Research Center. Exercise: Stages of Change-Short Form, Accessed April 19, 2010 from: http://www.uri.edu/research/cprc/ Measures/Exercise02.htm)


Rapid Assessment of Physical Activity Form: This tool was sent to participants during the newsletter intervention (a total of 8 times). This is a quick survey to collect self-reported information about their activity during the previous two weeks (Topolski, T.D., LoGerfo, J., Patrick, D.L., Williams, B., Walwick, J., Patrick, M.B. (2006). The Rapid Assessment of Physical Activity (RAPA) among older adults. Preventing Chronic Disease, Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2006/oct/06_0001.htm).

Youth and Aging Questionnaire: This was made up of four previously tested, valid and reliable surveys to measure aging knowledge and perceptions.


LIFE Program Evaluations: The LIFE Program creators have developed three qualitative (open-ended) evaluation questionnaires. These questionnaires assesses the individual’s motivation to join the LIFE Program, their program likes and dislikes, the likelihood of participating again, and any changes (positive or negative) they made as a result of the LIFE Program. The post evaluation for participants asks only about the on-site program under the direction of the trainer. The follow-up questionnaire asks participants to evaluate the LIFE Lessons newsletters and the experience with the on-site leader.