

"The real problem isn't
losing the capacity to do something,
the real problem is forgetting
the capacity to believe
that you can do something."

- **OVERVIEW SECTION**

Brief description about the project. The Overview Section explains why I chose this topic, determine what the problem is, what the project is expected to achieve and how it will achieve the final goal.

- **INFORMATION SECTION**

Brief summary of the details of the project. The Information Section helps me to explain why the project is being undertaken; it shows the details of the project, recent activities, plus details on the project key, project lead, and most active stakeholders within the project. The section defines the persons involved on the project as well as key players and their roles and responsibilities.

- **STEPS OF THE PROJECT**

This section defines each of the 7 steps of the project. From how to found sponsors and collaborators to the pilot.

- **PILOT**

Brief description of the details of the pilot program.

The pilot program is designed to confirm the initial hypothesis: on one hand, a large percentage of people over 75 years limits and discourages themselves because of social pressure more than because of real impediments. On the other hand, young people are not aware of how interesting, funny and enriching experience can get through the interaction with older adults.

- **WHAT DID I LEARN?**

This section sets the critical factors; discusses success factors and erroneous factors, outlined in terms of timelines and functionalities.

My intention on this section is discuss the success factors that the project must achieve to be considered a success, underlining the knowledge, innovation and social inclusion of CaminaConmigo.

- [**MY NEXT STEPS**](#)

This section explains what are the next steps in the planning process. The plan for developing a guide tool that helps developers and interested consumers to develop the project CaminaConmigo and creates an environment that encourages people to fully engage in the project and encourages innovative approaches to developing CaminaConmigo in their business.

- [**INDEX**](#)

Additional information.

*“You can't help getting older,
but you don't have to get old” G. Burns*

OVERVIEW SECTION

Because of my grandparents, I have never considered growing old a negative thing.; on the contrary, I was always really proud of how active they were. Over the course of the last year, though, my mother's parents started to feel depressed and unmotivated. I saw how age became a barrier in their minds. I realized that many seniors have a similar lack of motivation and that this situation is seen as normal simply because they are old. For my thesis, I created a project that helps address these two problems by focusing on the interaction between seniors and young people.

CaminaConmigo is a project that tries to connect seniors and young people, asking them to spend a few hours in the life of the other person or do an activity both love or want to try together. The goal is to show each person how the other lives. CaminaConmigo helps match seniors and young people and suggests different activities that they can do together. It also helps handle meet-up logistics.

While a lack of motivation does not have to be tied to a particular age, seniors suffer more often from it. They may feel sad or lonely as they age and experience drastic changes. To make things worse, society doesn't see this as an important problem to solve. Lack of motivation is considered unavoidable in old age. It's linked to negative associations of "growing old" and a resignation that at a certain point in life, we all lose the energy and enthusiasm to address obstacles, achieve goals, or change our lives.

We must understand the consequences of such resignation. If this lowered motivation persists over the time, it can cause physical and mental health problems such as severe mobility limitations and memory loss. A lack of motivation in old age shouldn't be considered natural; it's a mood that deserves attention from the wider community

INFORMATION SECTION

Name: CaminaConmigo

Location: Spain, Galicia, Coruña

Pilot duration-Dates: 03/01/2015 – 03/08/2015

Participant profiles:

- Seniors:

Over 75 years old

Living in La Coruña or nearby

People experiencing a lack of motivation

People that want to change their negative routine

People that want to try new things

People that can fend for themselves or people with reduced mobility who can move around with some help

- Young people:

Age between 18 and 35

Living in La Coruña or nearby

Nearby students or workers

People who are able to collaborate two days

People that want to try new things

Collaborators: La Coruña companies and businesses can participate in two ways:

-Giving special discounts in their services for participants to use during activity days or within one month afterwards

-Offering their employees the chance to be part of the project as participants. In this case, employees will invite their partners to their workplace to spend time together during work hours.

Goal: The project aims to help a group of seniors in La Coruna to change negative routines – and the effects of those routines – in their lives.

Hypothesis: 1) A large percentage of people over 75 years limits and discourages themselves because of social pressure more than because of real impediments 2) young people are not aware of how interesting, funny

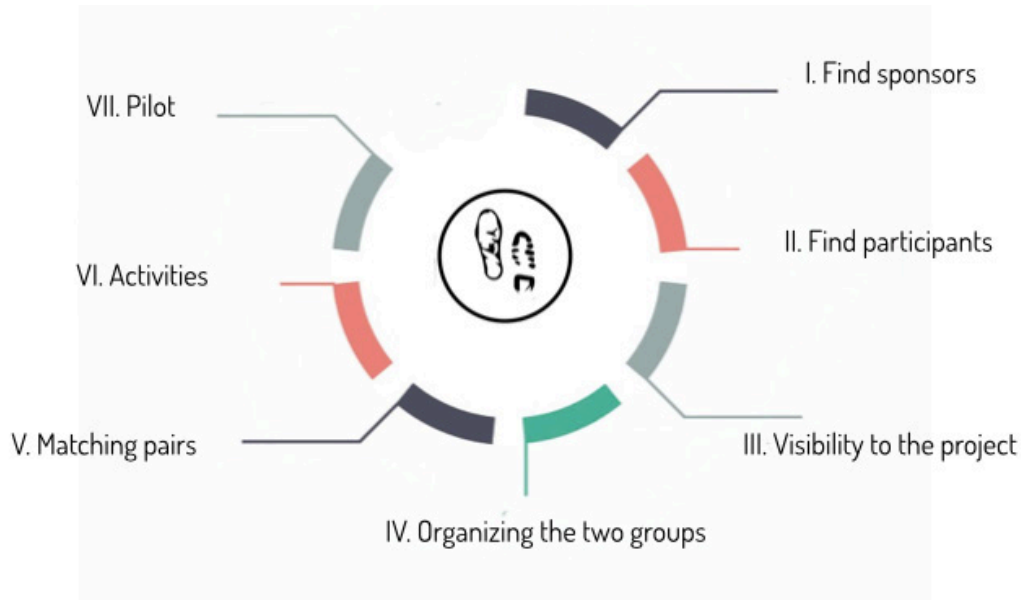
and enriching experience can get through the interaction with older adults.

"CaminaConmigo" insists on the importance of empathy in finding solutions to these problems.

"CaminaConmigo" was created to connect two sectors of society: old and young people. It aims to remind seniors that it's never too late to start something new, and younger generations of the important wisdom that their elders can share. The project is not trying to find a definitive solution to seniors' lack of motivation, but rather to teach participants the importance of empathy, taking part in the experiences and feelings of another person without judgment. "We listen to understand, not to respond".



STEPS OF THE PROJECT



FIND SPONSORS AND COLLABORATORS:

In addition to teaching professional skills, the classes also promote the importance of leisure activities and personal time.

Cuidara2 was an especially important partner for CaminaConmigo. The social organization helped me find participants, lent the project credibility, and financed one of the project activities (horse riding).

Aroma is a cafe/restaurant located in the Coruña city center of that provided a special breakfast or lunch to each pair for 1Euro.

Padre Rubinos is a charitable social institution founded almost a century ago that gives shelter and asylum to people in need. It has continuously grown and expanded its scope and now includes nursery schools and programs for seniors. In 2015, the institution moved its headquarters to a new impressive building that includes a hostel/refuge for homeless and transient people, a residence for the elderly, and a day care for families in

precarious financial situations. Padre Rubinos allowed me to recruit residents of the institution to participate in the project.

CEO Solutions is a development consultancy created in 2014 that helps clients identify market opportunities through design. They primarily focus on companies seeking to improve their production process and develop excellence among its employees.

CEO Solutions financed racquetball classes for participants because both cofounders of the company are very passionate about sports.

I also consider Sorin Gabriel Misu (owner of **Finca Os Chans**) and Ruben Nauga (owner of **Nauga**) collaborators because they offered CaminaConmigo half-price activity discounts.

FIND PARTICIPANTS:

In the beginning I was wrong about the profile of young people I was recruiting to the project; I was also being too strict in my requirements for the older adults. In the end, I ended up having a varied, rich group – not just because of their different ages, but also because of their different lives and lifestyles. I started the project with just two pairs and later other people joined us.

VISIBILITY:

I wanted to promote CaminaConmigo in a light, funny way that would attract public attention to the problem, create interest in the issue, and motivate more people to participate.

The campaign #selfieconmimayor (selfie with your elder) was one such effort. I wanted the hashtag to bring together two of my thesis goals: 1) convincing young people that hanging out with seniors can be fun and 2) building a broader culture of empathy. My aim was to get people's attention without evoking negative connotations such as loneliness, sadness, disability or dependence. It's true that some participants feel quite alone and

abandoned but I think we have to be reminded of the positive aspects of our lives in order to solve our problems. We need people to take pride in the seniors in their lives and to spend time more with them. Sometimes people have grandparents at home but don't know anything about them because they don't spend enough time with them.

ORGANIZING THE TWO GROUPS:

I ended creating two different group named as colors in order to give them a positive connotation. The Blue Group composed of participants aged 75 and the Green Group composed of participants aged between 18 and 35 years old., this step helped me to start the next step being more prepare also because I was aware of the number of people I need it in each group to have a even group.

MATCHING PAIRS:

It was very important to me that each person got something positive from the project, not just in terms of the relationship with their partner, but in terms of bigger attitudes about the other generation. Sometimes the matching was done according to simple criteria such as similar hobbies; other times I selected them according to personality or their reasons for joining the project

ACTIVITIES:

Once the pairs were formed, they chose what they wanted to do together, either by picking from the list of sponsored activities or by spending a typical day with the other person. Most of the participants chose one of the sponsored activities. Some participants told me that they did so because what they wanted was a change from their daily routines.

Here is the list of sponsored activities:

Horse Riding Club, Os Chans.

The Horse Riding Club normally charges 25E/hour for horseback riding. CaminaConmigo participants were able to ride horses for 10E/hour, because the owner of the club thought the project was a great way to make his business visible while also participating in an important social cause.

Cuidara2 sponsored this activity.

Scuba Diving

Nauga, which is part of Scuba School International, offered introductory scuba diving classes in its sport center's swimming pool and an hour in the spa circuit afterwards for 35E instead of 50E, the normal price the activities. Unfortunately, none of the participants chose this option.

Conversations at a Book Store

Nova Colon is a small and popular Coruna bookshop that has been offering their services to the city for more than 30 years. The store helped CaminaConmigo create a nice family environment in which participants were able to talk about books, the city, their motivations, and their dreams. This was a free activity, and the owner of the library also provided free beverages to the participants.

The Aquarium Finisterrae (Aquarium of the end of the World)

The Aquarium Finisterrae, founded in 1999, is an interactive science center focusing on marine biology, oceanography and the sea in general. It teaches people to be more caring toward marine life, paying special attention to the ecosystems of the Galician coast.

The normal price of center admission is 10€ and 4€ for seniors.

After the first pair arrive to the center, the Aquarium contact me to offer me the possibility of a special prize for all the participants of the project, alleging their involvement in social projects and its commitment to the dissemination of humanitarian activities.

The stadium of Deportivo de La Coruña

The stadium, establishment in 1906, is the home field of Deportivo de La Coruña and accommodates a total of 34,600 spectators. A Deportivo fan share his March monthly passes with CaminaConmigo participants.

Palacio de la Opera of La Coruña

The interior of The Opera Palace is surrounded by beautiful gardens with amazing views of the city. One CaminaConmigo pair was given the chance to attend an event at the Symphonic Orchestra of Galicia, sponsored by a subscriber.

Fitness classes in the Paseo Marítimo

A professional sports trainer donated his time to CaminaConmigo. Participating pairs got training sessions where they learned basic workout rules such as: exercise choice, order of exercises, length of your rest periods...etc.

Racquetball classes at the Sport Center “El Zona”

El Zona is a sport center that offers group and private offers racquetball and squash lessons, both for adults and juniors.

The activity for CaminaConmigo was a one-hour racquetball class in a big group or private depending on the hours and the level of the pair.

CEO Solutions sponsored this activity.

Boat trip

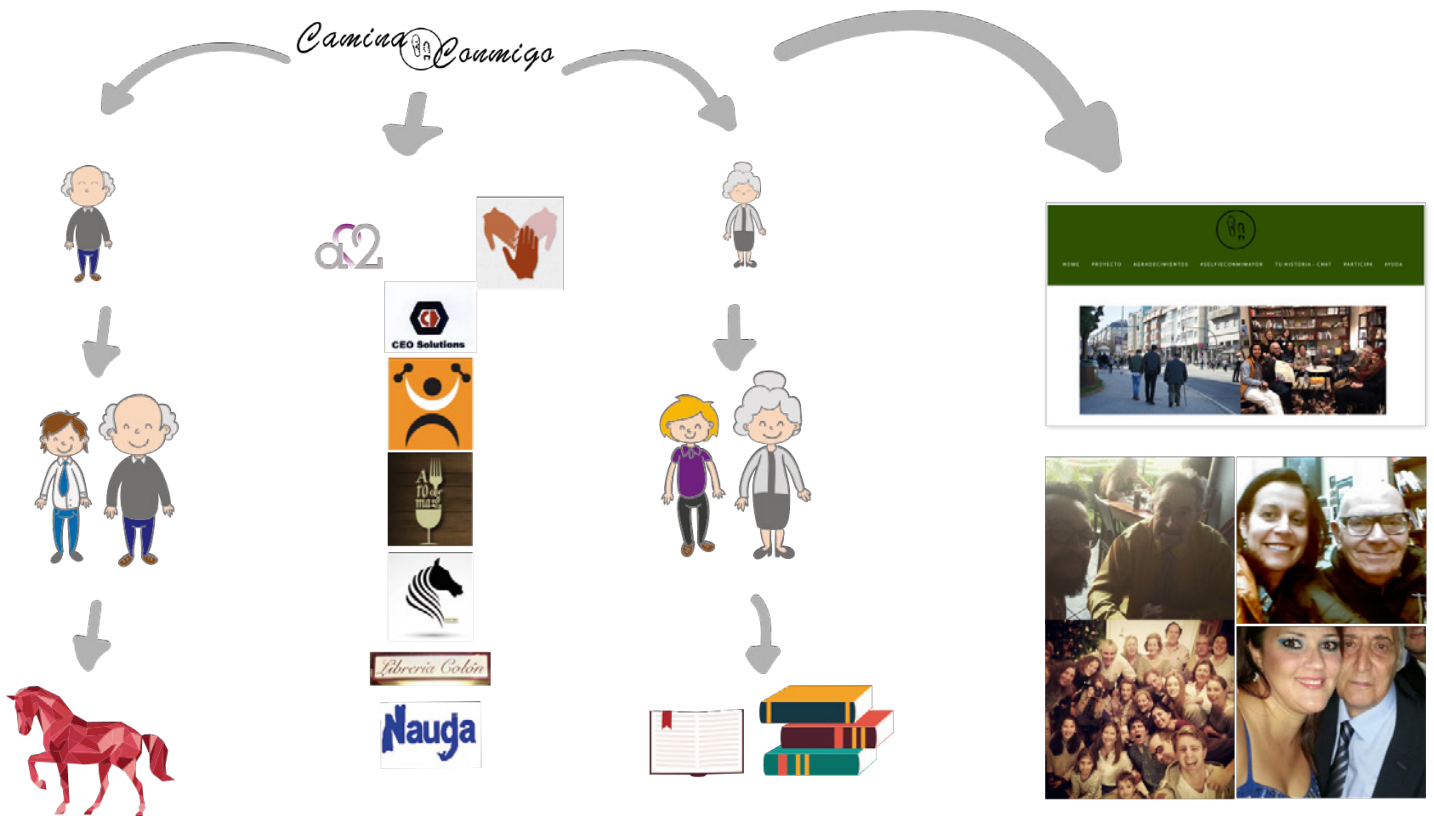
A boat owner offered a boat trip around the Coruña estuaries, enjoying views of La Coruña and its coastline, with the supervision of a professional during two/three hours. A lot of people requested this activity, but because of bad weather, it had to be cancelled.

PILOT:

Each pair spent at least 8 hours together spread out over two days. The person from the Green Group chose the first activity, and the person from

the Blue Group decided what to do for the second day.

One of the most difficult aspects of the project was logistics. Some pairs might meet at the same time in totally different places. The project relied on a lot of external help, especially with transportation.



PILOT

The pilot confirmed my hypothesis: on one hand, a large percentage of people over 75 years limits and discourages themselves because of social pressure more than because of real impediments. On the other hand, young people are not aware of how interesting, funny and enriching experience can get through the interaction with older adults.

Over the course of the project, the senior did things society thinks them incapable of doing; things that even they thought at the beginning were not possible for them. And most of the participating young people ended up realizing that they had a wrong idea of what sharing their time with older adults meant.

I think I achieved my project goals: to help a group of older adults of the city of La Coruña change negative routines (and the effects of those routines) in their lives. I learned how to approach a real-life problem and to motivate people challenging them to think different.

Participants of the pilot

Mariné- Javier



Mariné and Javier were the first CaminaConmigo pair.

On the 1st day they met at the Aroma, and then went together to see a temporary exhibition of Pablo Picasso at the Museum of Fine Arts. I drove them to the Museum, but

after the exhibition they chose to walk together to the Aroma.

On the 2nd day, Javier followed Mariné in her daily day. They visited the cafe where Mariné drinks a coffee every Thursday and afterwards visited Nanos, a Spanish brand that creates beautiful children's wear. Javier told me that

Mariné enthusiastically introduced him to the store attendants; she seemed very happy to have company and wanted everybody to know about it.

Loli-Montse



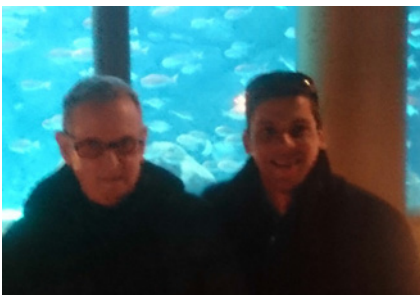
Loli is 78 years old and has lived in Padre Rubinos since the center opened some month ago. She loves to talk about the amazing things she's done in life, travelling around Spain. Now Loli is starting to lose her sight, so she wants to see a lot of things before that happens. I matched her with Montse, a 29 years old student who thought that spending time with seniors was charity, not a truly enjoyable experience.

The 1st day they met at The Aroma and I took them to the Palacio de la Opera by car. At the Palacio de la Opera they listened to a show by the Symphonic Orchestra of Galicia. Montse told me that the day felt very short to her because of all Loli's amazing stories.

The 2nd day they went to Nova Colon to take part in a book discussion with other pairs. Since the meetings, the two of them have been talking about continuing to meet outside the project.

Loli really enjoyed sharing her life with someone younger and giving advice, and Montse was surprised at how much she enjoyed her time with Loli. The experience changed her mind about older adults.

Luis-Alfonso



Luis never liked to do things outside the residence because, as he said to Alfonso, "they never plan things that catch my attention" but the Aquarium plan was caught his attention.

The Rubinos staff was surprised by his decision. Luis explained to Alfonso that he didn't go to things because he felt too old and that when the residence offered activities, they treated residents like babies.

Luis has some difficulty walking and sometimes needed to rest but Alfonso explained to me that this made him enjoy the experience more, because "we are always running without paying attention to what we have around us".

The 1st day they met at Padre Rubinos and then went together to the aquarium, where Alfonso told Luis about different aspects of marine life. Alfonso could answer all Luis questions because he's passionate about marine and maritime matters; he's a merchant seaman who works as a sailing teacher in Coruña.

They have not meet yet for the second activity because of scheduling issues and some health problems for Luis. But Luis wants Alfonso to go with him to a cafe where he sometimes drinks coffee with friends. Luis had to stop going for several weeks, but is excited to take Alfonso with him and introduce him to his friends, who they'll show photos of the Aquarium.

Fernando-Marta



Fernando is 81 years old and very shy. He doesn't like to do things that remind him of his limitations, so the Aquarium was the perfect activity. Marta is used to spending time with seniors, so she was kind to Fernando. She's also interested in the sea. I matched them together because of this common interest.

The 1st day they went to the aquarium and learned more about issues related to the sea.

The 2nd day Marta went to see the residence and spend time with him, learning about his daily routine. They went to El Timón (a chocolate store) to enjoy a hot chocolate with churros.

Licha-Celia



The psychologist at Rubinos told me that Licha was an amazing woman, very curious and sociable. She was alone and sometimes lonely, but had a lot of physical energy. I knew that Celia had had a bad experience doing volunteer with older adults some years ago. I was very conscious about the profile of woman they both needed. Licha needed someone she could laugh with and tell her stories. Celia needed someone kind and with whom she could laugh without feeling negative pressure.

The 1st meeting was at the bookstore. When they first met, they both thought that the other one was going to very interested in books; in fact, neither were especially passionate about books. Licha chose the bookstore because it was an activity that didn't require physical effort, and Celia went to the bookstore to please Licha. They ended up talking about things besides books. Celia told me she loved Licha's stories and that she was really kind.

The 2nd meeting was in Rubinos, where Licha took Celia on a tour of the center, her room and the garden of the residence. Licha showed Celia the baby clothes she makes to give away to newborn, promising to make a really beautiful set for Celia's babies in the future.

Luisa-Olalla



Luisa never does anything outside the residence, and the center psychologist didn't think of her as a participant for CaminaConmigo. But she heard in the dining room that some older adults were

going to a book discussion in a bookstore, she asked the psychologist about the possibility of going, too. Luisa loves books and the idea of talking with someone that also loves books. She explained to Olalla that she used to write a lot when she was younger. On the other side, Olalla is the daughter of the bookstore owner Begoña; Begoña thought this would be an amazing experience for Olalla, who also loves books because of her mother.

The 1st meeting was at the bookstore, where they talked about books, dreams and life. Olalla asked a lot of question to Luisa because she was very interested in her life.

The 2nd meeting will be in one week. They are thinking about meeting at the Aroma and going to another bookstore to continue their conversation about books. They might also end up going to Nova Colon again and shadowing Begoña in a typical day at the bookstore, which Luisa is really curious about.

Julio-Nacho



Julio wanted to see horses more than anything else; he talked about horses from the first moment he realized there was a possibility to see them. He explained to me, and later to Nacho, that he had been around horses all his life. His parents and grandparents used to have horses, and he married a woman who was also passionate about horses.

Nacho is 28 years old and immediately wanted to participate when he heard about the project from a friend. He used to ride horses some years ago, so he, too, was interested in this activity. He wanted to be paired with someone that also loved horses so they'd have common hobbies.

The 1st day Nacho and Julio went to see the football match at the Deportivo de La Coruna Stadium, in where they shared their opinions about the team and the game while they enjoy a nice day

Nacho went to Rubinos to pick-up Julio, and they went together to see the horses. Because of medical restrictions Julio wasn't allow to ride the horse, but he was so passionate about the idea of being near horses and being able to touch them that he didn't care about not being able to ride. He enjoyed watching Nacho ride the horse. They told me that after the riding, they enjoyed a nice walk together around the installation while Julio recounted his experience with horses; Nacho told me that Julio had really interesting stories about his life and horses. Nacho was happy because he was able to take his time and enjoy the day, not rushing, just enjoying the beauty of nature.

Manuel-Noa



Manuel and Noa had something in common: they both love music. Manuel knew a lot of amazing Galician songs and Noa was an expert tambourine musician. I put them together because I knew that their shared love would make their interaction fluent and natural. I hoped they would choose some activities related to music.

The 1st day Noa taught Manuel how to play the tambourine over the course of a couple of hours in a very nice park next to Manuel's home.

The 2nd day Manuel surprised Noa by teaching her some Galician songs accompanied by the instrument. Manuel was proud to learn something new. And Noa was proud to see how much Manuel appreciated the effort she'd put into teaching him.

Hilario-David



Hilario spent his time looking out the window of his house at the garden he used to tend some years ago; He felt tired and like he was neglecting it. David is a musician who loves everyday, mundane details, talking about music, and making others love it, too.

The 1st day Hilario showed David how to take care for the garden, remembering the work he used to do, which really motivated David, who decided to create a small garden in his house and ask Hilario for growing tips.

The 2nd day David taught Hilario about music – more concretely, how to read music. Hilario was surprised how easy it was and wants to learn more.

Jose-Teresa



Jose is the grandfather of a friend of mine, Iria. She really wanted her grandfather to be part of CaminaConmigo because he was so depressed after his surgery.

Jose used to ride a lot but because of medical restrictions he left horse riding.

Teresa was very curious about the program and she really wanted to be part. She loves sports but she didn't try horseback riding before.

The 1st day they went to the horse-riding Club. Teresa was very happy, on the contrary Jose wasn't feeling comfortable at first; Teresa told me that Jose thought he'd never be able to go horseback riding again, and he was feeling very nervous because some family members were also here.

While Teresa was on the horse, Jose was just looking to her from the distance, explaining to me all the things that he thought that she need to do different. But he didn't want to try it because "What if I fall in front of my family? I do not want to do that. I'm too old". Finally, she persuaded him to try it. It was amazing. He was able to manage the horse without any problem. The teacher left him alone because "he knows what he's doing" Jose's families were so much happy seeing here on the horse. My friend Iria couldn't believe it "he always need help to put on shoes and jackets!"

Margot-Arturo



Margot is the owner of Cuidara2, partner of CaminaConmigo. Because she was going to partner with the program, she wanted to be a participant.

Arturo lives at Padre Rubinos, in where he enjoys nature, reading books and taking walks. I match them together because Arturo used to work in a non-profit company, which is what Cuidra2 is.

The 1st meeting was at the bookstore. When they first met, they both thought that the other person was very interesting. They had a lot of common things and they immediately started to talk about books and how non-profit companies' works.

The 2nd meeting was in Rubinos, where they spend hours talking about how Margot could improve Cuidara2.

Since that day, Arturo has become an external consultant of Cuidara2. They meet each Friday at Rubinos, where they enjoy a coffee and they improve Cuidara2.

WHAT DID I LEARN?

I learned that sometimes you really need to take a step back and take a serious look at what you are doing without being scared of change.

A while back, I was working with the Civic Center in my hometown through the Department of Social Services without looking for other options. I thought working there was my only option, but, during the Christmas break, the person in charge of the Department of Social Services told me they would not support my project any more because it was election time.

This experience taught me several things. First, I was so wrapped up in my project that I didn't notice they weren't determined to carry out the program. Secondly, I hadn't understood the importance of networking and finding people that will support you through uncertain times. Losing their support forced me to go out of my comfort zone and find support in other people or companies. Because of it, I met Margot, the entrepreneurial founder of a new social organization that provides tools and strategies to improve the daily life of caretakers. With her help I achieved more in one week than working with the Department of Social Services over a month.

After Christmas break, I started to define and improve the project CaminaConmigo. While I was back in New York, my partner Margot helped me find new participants and avoid difficulties due to distance, such as not being able to talk face to face with possible candidates and not sharing time zone.

I planned to develop the prototype during spring break and thought that the project was already well defined, carefully scheduled and ready. But things are never as easy as they seem. When I arrived in Coruna, some people who promised to participate in the pilot changed their minds without offering much in the way of excuses. This issue showed me another important lesson: I was targeting the wrong type of people. Once I started to talk about CaminaConmigo with people outside my circle of acquaintances, I was able

to get more responsible people into the project, people that wanted to be part of the program because of their convictions instead of people who would do it as a favor. I hadn't been "selling" my program to the right people.

After most of the original participants backed out, I was forced to find other day centers and senior residences. In the end I found out the social charity institution Padre Rubinos had just inaugurated a new residence. The psychologist of the center loved the project idea, so she discussed it with some Rubinos residents. She ended up finding two volunteers, who later talked with other residents. At present, I have more than five senior participants from Rubinos, plus more than ten who want to be part of the program. The last thing I have learned so far was that I had to act in a more professional way in order to find suitable participants for the project.

MY NEXT STEPS

Right now the project is still running in Coruña thanks to the support of my partner, Cuidara2, and the strong relationship established with Padre Rubinos foundation.

Both organizations want CaminaConmigo to be part of their internal programming. Padre Rubinos wants the program to continue exactly as I created it, and Cuidara2 wants to adapt it to focus more on caretakers.

My next step is the creation of a manual that will help Padre Rubinos, Cuidara2 and whoever is interested on the program to reproduce by themselves. The manual will provide them details about important issues such as logistics, costs, methodologies for matching pairs, getting the attention of young participants... etc. I drafted a table of contents on the following page that show what the guide would look like. I have also created a questionnaire that each pilot participant will complete to collect data and improve future programs. I have sent it to several participants already and am waiting for the results. The questionnaire follows the Table of Contents.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. DETAILS

1. Information
2. Empathy
3. The real problem

2. SPONSORS

1. The social aspect – The importance of finding good sponsors
2. How the sponsor can collaborate
3. Special discounts

3. PARTICIPANTS

1. Taking part in CaminaConmigo
2. The right profile – Participant requirements

4. GROUPS

1. Organizing the two groups
2. Planning time together
3. Matching pairs and developing good relationships

5. ACTIVITIES

1. Organization
2. Options
3. Costs

6. LOGISTICS

1. Schedule
2. Transportation

DETAILS

Information

This manual will help you develop your own CaminaConmigo project to help seniors in your town, city, or wherever else in Spain. You may think your city takes care of seniors because they have nice residence or because they have family nearby, but these two factors don't necessarily determine a person's happiness.

The idea of this manual is help you to reproduce what CaminaConmigo does. The important thing is being motivated and trying your best. The guide will help you organize the different project details; chapter by chapter, we will go into the different details that you will need to consider.

CaminaConmigo is a project that connects seniors and young people, asking them to spend a typical day with the other person or to do an activity together that they both love or want to try. The goal is to show both people how the other lives. To facilitate this connection, CaminaConmigo matches seniors and young people, suggests different activities they can do together, and offers special prices for those activities. CaminaConmigo also handles all the logistic aspects, including transportation, schedules and permissions.

Empathy

CaminaConmigo believes empathy is essential to designing real solutions. But do you really know what empathy means?

Sometimes we confuse empathy with sympathy. Sympathy means to "feel with," to have compassion for or commiserate with another person. Empathy means to "feeling into," to project one's personality into another person to more fully understand that person. We don't want young people to feel depressed or worried about seniors, and we don't want them to feel that they have to solve the problem "we want them to understand, not to respond."

The real problem

A lack of motivation is often considered unavoidable in old age. It's linked to negative associations with "growing old" and a resignation to the idea after a certain point in life, everyone begins to lose the energy and enthusiasm to address obstacles, achieve goals, and change their lives.

Many people over 75 years that might be able to have an active life stay home instead. The loss of contact with other people and monotonous days can lead to depressive states, accelerating the aging process. The fact that society thinks of this issue as natural only exacerbates the situation.

We must understand the consequences that such resignation can produce, because if this lack of motivation persists, it can cause physical and mental health problems such as the development of severe mobility limitations and memory loss. A lack of motivation in seniors shouldn't be considered natural. It's a mood that deserves attention from the broader community.

SPONSORS

The social aspect – Importance of find good sponsors

In order to create a successful project, it's important to identify stakeholders that want to support the project in different ways.

Be careful what kind of sponsors you seek out. You need people who really understand the goals of CaminaConmigo. The project is not trying to find a definitive solution to seniors' lack of motivation but to teach participants the importance of empathy, in taking part in the experiences and feelings of another person without judgment.

How the sponsor can collaborate

The sponsors can collaborate with you in different ways: by giving special discounts in their services, for instance, or by giving you money for the activities or transportation. I found a range of establishments interested in support CaminaConmigo in my hometown, mainly through special discounts, from a 1Euro breakfast to half-price activities.

The important thing to explain to collaborators is that a relationship with CaminaConmigo will mean more visibility for their business and more clients. Don't ask for more than a business can give, because then you won't be creating strong relationships. That said, every establishment, no matter how big or small it is, can give you something

Special discounts

Companies and business have different options for participating in this project:

- Giving special discounts in their services for participants to use during activity days or within one month afterwards.
- Giving employees the chance to be part of the project as participants. In this case, employees will invite their partners to the workplace to spend time together during hours.

PARTICIPANTS

Be part of CaminaConmigo

The project aims to help seniors to change the negative routines (and the effects of those routines) in their lives

The right profile - Specific requirements

The idea is to find seniors older than 75 years old, but you should be open to the idea of accepting younger seniors that also feel that they are not important and stuck in negative routines. It may be people that want to change these negative routines themselves or that have someone close that wants to help them do so. You should be looking for people who can fend for themselves or who, if they have reduced mobility, can still move around with some help.

The ideal age for young participants is between 18 and 35 years old. They should live in the city where the program's being held or be able to get to that place by themselves. Whether students or workers, the most important characteristics for younger participants is that they can at least two days to meeting their senior partner, are enthusiastic and want to try new things.

GROUPS

Organizing the two groups

In order to create an easy system to match each pair, you should divide them into two groups: One group for the older adults and another group for the younger participants. I suggest splitting them into a Blue Group and a Green Group, the Blue Group being composed of participants aged 75 or more and the Green Group being composed of participants aged between 18 and 35 years old.

Whatever name you choose, it's important that it has a positive connotation

Hours together

"CaminaConmigo" was created to connect two sectors of society, seniors and young people. It's meant to remind new generations of the wisdom of our elders and to remind seniors that it's never too late to start something new.

Matching pairs - Relation between the pairs

It's important that each project participant get something positive from the experience, not just in terms of the individual relationships between participants but in terms of bigger attitudes between the two generations. You should use different matching criteria depending on each individual. Sometimes this will be as simple as shared hobbies; others times you'll match pairs according to personalities or reasons for joining the project.

The best way to do this step by creating a questionnaire in which you can ask them personal information such as age, occupation, daily schedules, what they want to achieve from the experience, what kind of activity they want to do, and why they decided to be part of the project.

ACTIVITIES

Organization

Once the pairs have been formed, they choose what they want to do together, either from the list of sponsored activities or by spending a typical day with the other person.

I found that most participants chose to do at least one of the sponsored activities. Some participants told me they choose the activity because what they wanted was get out of their negative routines. Don't worry too much about what activity pairs choose; no matter what, they will be sharing stories life experiences.

The important factor is organization; you need to control scheduling, cost and transportations. In order to make transportation easier, you can set one or two meeting points for all participants. If you are working with just one senior's resident, one meeting point could obviously be this place, but if you are working with more than one senior residence, then the best option is select a cafe where you are able to offer a special deal for your participants

Options

Don't be afraid to select activities that people normally don't think of for seniors. Activities can be adapted to each person, age and specific situation. Here are the activities I offered in Coruña: horseback riding, scuba diving, conversations at a bookstore, tours of an aquarium, games at football stadium, trips to the opera house, fitness classes, racquetball, classes and boat trips.

Price

You want to find activities that are reasonably priced or that you can get a discount on for your participants.

Remember to explain to owners of the establishments that collaborating with your project will give their business visibility and attract clients. Don't ask for more than what the business can give you

LOGISTIC

Schedule

The best way of organizing schedules is to offer each activity in two or three different times slots. One way to break it down is into mornings or afternoons or into weekdays or weekends.

Transportation

You should provide transportation, at least for the senior group. Because you are going to set just one or two meeting points, you can recruit another person to help make the trips from the senior home to the meeting point and from the meetings point again to the house.

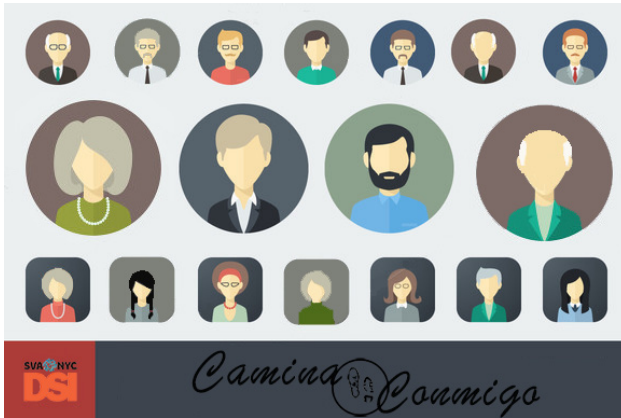
Hopefully, after the pair's first meeting, the younger participant will pick up the older adult for the second meeting. If not, you'll need to supply a driver both days

INDEX

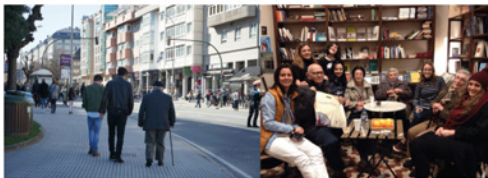
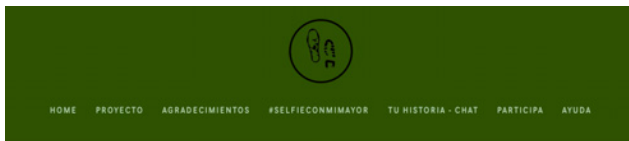
Questionnaire

1. Name (Optional)
2. Select your group: Participants age 75 or more – Participants age between 18-35 years old
3. Please score your experience: - Excellent – Very good – Good – Average – Poor
4. Would you repeat the experience: -Yes –No – Maybe
5. Why would you repeat the experience?: - Pair – Activity – Both – Another
6. What would you like to change?
7. What do you like the most
8. Please, feel free to add comments or ideas that you want to share with us

CaminaConmigo Card:



Website



*El verdadero problema no es perder la capacidad de hacer algo.
El verdadero problema es perder la capacidad de creer que tu puedes hacer algo.*



"Jamás un hombre es demasiado viejo para recomenzar su vida y no hemos de buscar que lo que fue le impida ser lo que es o lo que será"
— Miguel de Cervantes



OPCIONES PARA PASAR EL DÍA JUNTOS

No debes olvidar que el aprender aprender te muestra distintas posibilidades sobre como puedes pasar el día con tu compañía, pero no crea un mal día de conmemoración. Cada participante puede elegir que hacer durante su día.

ACTIVAR



GRACIAS!

ME GUSTARÍA AGRADECER LA PARTICIPACIÓN, EMPÑO Y DEDICACIÓN DE DISTINTOS COLABORADORES SIN CUYO APOYO CAMINA CONMIGO NO SERÍA POSIBLE.



Visita su página para saber más de su bonita iniciativa **CUIDAR2**. CUIDAR2 nace de la experiencia personal de una cuidadora familiar que, consciente de las necesidades que tienen muchos otros personas en su misma situación al implicarse en el cuidado de uno de sus familiares dependientes, quiere con esta iniciativa generar un cambio de mentalidad, de visión y de valoración efectiva de los cuidadores.

QUIERO HACER UNA MENCIÓN ESPECIAL AL ESFUERZO DE CUIDAR2. GRACIAS MARGOT POR TU COMPROMISO Y POR APORTAR TU EXPERIENCIA EN ESTE TERRENO. SIN TU APOYO Y DEDICACIÓN NO HABRÍA LOGRADO PONER EN MARCHA ESTA INICIATIVA SOCIAL.



Aroma abrió sus puertas en septiembre de 1993 poniendo su energía e ilusión en su trabajo. Hoy, 20 años después, cuentan con un amplio y fiel grupo de clientes y amigos.



PARTICIPA

1.Marzo.2015 - 8.Marzo.2015

CUESTIONARIO PARA PARTICIPAR

COLABORADORES

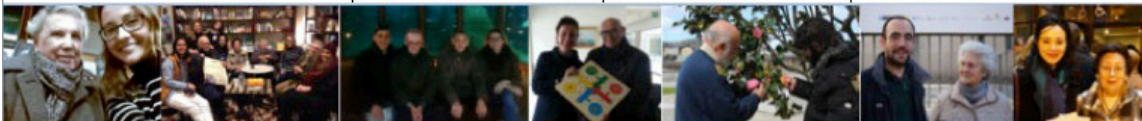


Campaign #selfieconmimayor (selfie with your elder) – Some of the photographs:



Participants Excel:

PAIRS WALKING	1st meeting	2nd meeting	TRANSPORTATION
Mariné-Javier	Yes - Exposition of Pablo Picasso	Yes - Daily day	My car
Loli-Montse	Yes - Palacio de la Opera	Yes - Bookshop	volunteer' car
Luis - Alfonso	Yes - Aquarium	Not yet	By bus
Fernando - Marta	Yes - Aquarium	Yes - Daily day	Cuidara2 car
Arturo - Olalla	Yes - Book Store	Not yet	volunteer' car
Licha - Celia	Yes - Book Store	Yes - Residence	volunteer' car
Mercedes - Margot	Yes - Book Store	Yes - Residence	volunteer' car
Julio - Nacho	Yes - Futbol	Yes - Horse Riding	Nacho' car
Julio - Damian	Yes - Futbol	Yes - Daily day	My car
Manuel -Noa	Yes - Music class	Yes - Coffee time	Noa' car
Hilario-David	Yes - Laern to read music	Yes - Gardening class	David' car
PAIRS ON THE WAY	1st meeting	2nd meeting	Some details
Carmen-Mateo			Carmen is very shy / reduced mobility
4 older adults from Rubinos that want to go to the Aquarium			They want to go together
Ana (Green Group: young people)			She loves horses / talkative
Nazareth (Green Group: young people)			She likes fitness / talkative



Some photographs of the participants:

















"The real problem isn't
losing the capacity to do something,
the real problem is forgetting
the capacity to believe
that you can do something."