

Are You Living Your Best Retirement Life? Mid-Point Report

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Are You Living Your Best Retirement Life? Is a 6-week course currently being offered through the Seniors College Association of Nova Scotia (SCANS), with sponsorship from the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners (ADRP). The course draws on my own research related to lifestyle planning and optimal aging and that of other researchers to help course participants, in practical ways, to take stock of their current life situation, and to create goals and plans for aligning decisions about time use with life priorities. Example topics have included:

- Retirement is one more in a lifetime of transitions
- The power of words to define (limit or empower) us, e.g., aging and retirement
- Lifestyle planning tools
- A 'resource' perspective on retirement and aging

There were 40 people who originally signed up for the course¹, which is one of twelve SCANS HRM course offerings this fall. 30 of these folks have attended consistently (ranging in age between mid-fifties to mid-eighties; all are retired). Unlike other SCANS courses, the pressure is on the course participants, as the sessions are designed to encourage active discussions and sharing. The basis for these conversations is participant 'workbooks' (printing costs generously provided by the ADRP) which include exercises that foster self-reflection, self-assessment or priority/goal setting and planning.

Although most of us are initially reticent to talk about ourselves in small groups, the depth of sharing has been impactful. As one participant, a Dal retiree, said after the last class, "I feel like we need this course to run for 20 weeks to cover all we have to talk about."

Our plan moving forward is to talk more deeply about strategies for overcoming obstacles to getting the most out of life and to share information and ideas about possibilities for cultivating meaningful connections and participation in our community.

¹ Note: Course registration was limited to 40