



TEA *for* CHANGE TOOLKIT

Welcome!

Around the world, more than 800 million grandmothers hold deep life experience, unique skills and abilities, and the earned trust of their communities. They are an abundant, under-recognized, and powerful force for good. Imagine tapping all that energy and wisdom! The Tea for Change toolkit is a simple way to start unleashing "Grandmother Magic" in your community.

Inside this kit, you'll find inspiring stories of grandmothers transforming lives around the globe, and a simple plan to host your own Tea for Change.

If you have questions about this kit or would like to connect with our team as you are planning your Tea for Change, please email us at info@grandmothercollective.org. We'd love to learn about the impact you and grandmothers in your community are driving!

Together, let's create a better world!

Warmly,
Grandmother Collective Team

grandmothercollective.org



TEA *for* CHANGE TOOLKIT

VISION & OVERVIEW

Across cultures and generations, gathering over tea has provided a sacred, joyful space for women to slow down, connect, and care for one another. When we share a cup, we create a welcoming bridge across our communities—turning everyday conversations into powerful moments of unity.

Together, elder women hold an extraordinary wellspring of wisdom, lived experience, and natural leadership capable of healing, uplifting, and building a brighter future. By gathering over tea, we claim our collective strength, celebrate our stories, and activate local solutions that bring hope and positive impact to the world around us.

5-STEP TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

1. **Gather:** Host friends for tea/coffee and explore grandmother-led social change.
2. **Reflect:** Discuss the unique roles of female elders in your culture and community.
3. **Define:** Identify local and global challenges and envision a better world.
4. **Map:** Inventory personal and community assets.
5. **Act:** Build an action plan and connect with a global movement.

Did You Know?

Tea, thé, cha, or chai is the second most consumed beverage globally after water, with over 6 billion cups consumed daily.

Women were excluded from 17th-century European coffee houses, making private tea gatherings their preferred space for connection.

In India, chai symbolizes hospitality and identity; in China, tea ceremonies during weddings signify the union of two families.

Across cultures, women gather—from quilting bees and coffee klatches to savings groups and tea circles.



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STEP

1

GATHER

Preparation & Guest List

- *Group Size:* Aim for 6–8 women.
- *Inclusivity:* Guests do not need to be grandmothers; invite any woman who values female leadership and positive impact
- *Invitations:* Adapt the provided template in the Appendix to send to guests.

Tea Time Activity

VALUING OUR RITUALS & TRADITIONS

Grandmothers are often keepers of tradition. Rituals – acts embodying collective beliefs to create continuity – include holidays, rites of passage, family meals, and cultural practices.

Individual Prompt: Ask each attendee to introduce themselves and share a tradition or ritual meaningful to them and why.

Group Reflection: What do these rituals have in common? Where do they originate? Why do they matter in our community today?



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STEP

2

REFLECT

Read Together: Grandmother Magic

Across cultures, elder women share universal strengths.

While "magic" can describe caretaking and healing, it historically carries baggage—such as folkloric tropes of witches or hags. Reclaiming this term recognizes that elder women hold a unique, transformative power that can be harnessed for good.

Prior to or during the event, share copies of the Grandmother Magic handout (see Appendix).



Tea Time Activity

GROUP REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What role have grandmothers or female elders historically played in your family or community?

As a female elder today, how do you express wisdom, care, culture, and leadership?

What qualities did the elders you grew up with display? How have those roles evolved today?

Where do your experiences align or differ from others in the room?



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STEP

3

DEFINE

Imagine the change you want to see and explore how to make it happen.



Tea Time Activity

1. ENVISIONING CHANGE

Spend time as a whole group discussing the world you want to see. What core changes need to happen locally, regionally, or globally? Paint a collective picture of a better future.

2. ISSUE-BASED ACTION PLANNING

Pair up with someone interested in similar focus areas (e.g., education, climate, youth employment, girls' empowerment, civic engagement, neighborhood beautification).

1. What motivates you to take action on this issue?
2. What obstacles exist, and what information do you need to move past them?
3. How can you combine your unique roles as female elders to define an initiative?
4. What specific, joyful projects or activities can you launch together?



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STEP

4



MAP

Learning Concept: Asset Framing

Asset Framing defines communities by their aspirations, strengths, and inherent resources (culture, knowledge, skills) rather than their deficits or needs.

Tea Time Activity

ASSET INVENTORY

In pairs, list resources related to your chosen issue area:

Personal Assets: What unique skills, experiences, and networks do you personally bring?

Community Assets: What local institutions, groups, culture, or individuals can be leveraged to support this work?

GROUP REFLECTION

Reconvene with the full group. Share your lists, paying specific attention to the unique assets you hold as elder women and grandmothers. How does this change how you view your potential impact?



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STEP

5

CLOSING REFLECTION



Before departing, ask each participant to answer these closing prompts:

- What can I commit to doing today?
- What is my availability and commitment level?
- What will bring me joy in this process?
- Who else can I engage?

Tea Time Activity

CLOSING CIRCLE

Ask every attendee to share one sentence about a new insight they gained during the tea.



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POST-EVENT NEXT STEPS

Set a Date

Schedule a follow-up meeting for interested participants to begin working on project commitments.

Send Follow-Up Email

Include:

- Gratitude for participation.
- A summary of key reflections and commitments made.
- Details and an invitation for the next meeting.
- Links to relevant resources and community assets.



The background of the entire page is a teal-colored image of two hands cupping tea leaves. Overlaid on the top left is a white line-art graphic of a tea tag with a string.

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Appendix

Handout 1: Event Invitation Template

Handout 2: "Grandmother Magic" Qualities

Handout 3: Grandmother Impact Examples





TEA *for* CHANGE

You're Invited!

Hosted By: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Join us for Tea for Change, an intimate gathering inspired by the wisdom of grandmothers and elder women. Across cultures and history, gathering over tea has provided a sacred space for women to connect, celebrate, heal, and lead.

Together, we will unite around shared purpose — harnessing our wisdom, experience, and collective power to tackle the issues that matter most to us. Through simple, engaging activities, we will turn our personal stories and community strengths into ideas that spark real action. Whether you are a grandmother, elder woman, or an ally who values female leadership, join us to build on our collective strengths and activate positive impact!

Learn more about how grandmothers are shaping our world for good at grandmothercollective.org





TEA *for* CHANGE

At Grandmother Collective, "grandmother" is more than a family title. It describes a vital role in communities and a guiding approach to leadership found among elder women in nearly every culture — leadership grounded in wisdom, purpose, and care for the generations that follow. Some women are biological grandmothers; others are not — they are the aunts, elders, and mentors every community depends on.

Across cultures and communities, we see these universal qualities in elder women:

Qualities	Description
Wisdom + Experience	Grandmothers have lived through different eras and have often experienced a range of social, cultural, and technological shifts; they offer a grounded outlook and real skills and experience to navigate everyday and complex problems.
Empathy + Compassion	Grandmothers often have a deep understanding of human needs and emotions; they offer guidance and support to their families and communities, whether it be practical advice, emotional grounding, or mentorship.
Trust + Guidance	In times of uncertainty, Grandmothers often draw on their own experiences to provide a stabilizing presence, instilling hope and trust to navigate complex challenges and build bridges between generations, groups, and communities.
Resilience	Grandmothers embody remarkable adaptability and capability, effortlessly navigating the changing tides of life. With grace and wisdom, they embrace new challenges, offering love, support and invaluable lessons to their families and communities.
Future Focus	Grandmothers are often thinking of how to build a better future for generations to come. They act with purpose and vision to shape a better world for those who come next; they mentor, advocate, mobilize, create traditions, learn, and teach.
Culture Guardianship	Grandmothers play key roles in shaping family traditions and values. They share stories and anecdotes about their own lives, and those of their ancestors. This provides a valuable sense of continuity and belonging in communities.
Pattern Recognition	Grandmothers often understand relationships and see connections in unique ways, equipping them to effectively and creatively solve problems.
Sacredness	In many cultures, female elders are believed to possess spiritual power, and are often consulted for advice and guidance on matters related to spirituality. Grandmothers are powerful and revered because of this connection.



TEA *for* CHANGE

GRANDMOTHER IMPACT EXAMPLES

- [For All Ages Tea @ 3 Program](#) (Simsbury, CT, USA): Reduces isolation and builds cross-generational friendships by pairing older adults with younger community members for weekly virtual chats over a cup of tea.
- [Friendship Bench Zimbabwe](#) (Harare, Zimbabwe): Provides accessible mental health support to under-resourced communities by training grandmothers to deliver problem-solving therapy on wooden benches in public spaces.
- [Grandmas2Go®](#) (Medford, OR, USA): Eases stress for struggling new parents during critical early child development years by matching experienced elder women as volunteer mentors in family homes.
- [Grandparent Circle JPA](#) (Chicago, IL, USA): Supports the social-emotional well-being of middle schoolers facing community violence and neglect by pairing elder mentors with youth for singing, crafts, and active listening.
- [Hemphill Community Center](#) (Jackhorn, KY, USA): Builds local resilience and supports neighbors in need by operating a central community hub that provides emergency relief, resources, and social gatherings.
- [The Grandma Stand](#) (New York, NY, USA): Offers agenda-free comfort and wisdom to city residents by setting up pop-up listening stands in public spaces where passersby can sit and talk with a local grandmother.
- [Fresh Start Community Farm](#) (Newport, VT, USA): Improves access to fresh, healthy food by operating an intergenerational farm where volunteers work together and earn free produce based on hours contributed.
- [We Love Reading](#) (Amman, Jordan): Fosters a lifelong love of reading among children by training local elders and adults to host interactive read-aloud sessions in neighborhood spaces.