

Virtual Health Fair

Improving Seniors Mental Health



1/4

of adults aged 65 and older are considered to be socially isolated

Unipolar depression occurs in

7%

of the general older population

social isolation was associated with about a

50%

increased risk of dementia

How do seniors maintain good mental health?

And how can you help?



Weekly 'keep busy' calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Meal prep or cooking- Get outdoors!- Children check in- phone or visit (2x per week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Try journaling- Physical activity- Activity of choice (slide 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Try a craft!- Children check in- phone or visit (2x per week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Try colouring or painting- Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Try a crossword or puzzle!- Try a mindfulness exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Read a book, listen to a podcast or the radio- Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Visit with family or friends (safely in person or virtually)

*This calendar is a suggestion, feel free to create your own calendar on the next slide!

Weekly blank calendar - *create your own!*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Ways to engage during check-ins

Questions/discussions:

- Ask them how they are feeling today or ask about the highlight of their day
- Tell them a story about your day to make them feel like part of your day
- Share ideas of healthy fun meals to try making
- Ask if they have been outside yet today



Ways to engage during check-ins continued

Questions/discussions:

- What is one new and interesting thing you have been thinking about lately or that you learned?
- What is something that brings you energy and joy?
- Have you read any good books lately?



What is Journaling?

Journaling is the practice of noting down thoughts, feelings, goals and notable events that happen throughout the day/week

Topics for seniors to journal about:

- What are you grateful for today?
- Set any intentions or goals that you have for the day/week
- How did certain events make you feel?

Benefits of journaling:

- Purge negative thoughts/emotions
- Sharpen memory
- Sleep better
- Boosts self-confidence & self identity



Daily in-home activities

- Crafting
 - Occasion themed crafts (ie. Valentine's Day themed crafts)
 - Resources:
 - <https://craftsbyamanda.com/category/craft-tutorials/adult-crafts/>
 - <https://feltmagnet.com/crafts/senior-crafts>
- Painting | purchase paint supplies from a crafts shop or the dollar store
- Adult colouring books
- Scrapbooking or creating photo albums
- Puzzles, crosswords, sudoku, online scrabble



Physical activity & good nutrition = better mental health!

- Physical activity (strengthening exercises, swimming, yoga) improves mental health and well being
 - See the other pamphlet on exercises for seniors
- Good nutrition improves mood! Focus on homemade meals high in vegetables and grains and avoid foods high in sugar and salt



References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Loneliness and Social Isolation Linked to Serious Health Conditions*.

<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/publications/features/lonely-older-adults.html>

World Health Organization. (2021). *Mental health of older adults*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-of-older-adults>