



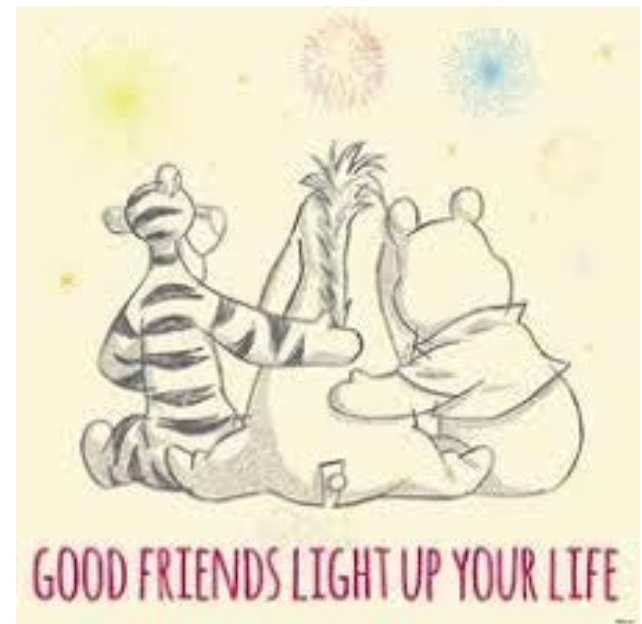
broken hearts in Isolation

with: dr. matt stricherz / psychologist



ADLER “five obligations”

- OCCUPATION
- SOCIETY BELONG TO A GROUP
- LOVE PEOPLE
- SELF – DEVELOPMENT
- SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT



PRIOR TO COVID-19



*NURSING
HOME
Visits*

*Cancelled due
to
COVID-19
Precautions*



The Reality of PANDEMIC Words

- Social Distancing
- Self-isolation
- Quarantine
- Lockdown and “Stay at home orders”
- Telehealth
- On-line check-ins
- Masks -surgical /N95 /personalized /cloth /respirators
- Washing Hands {is this a goal or a rule}
- Curbside Delivery
- Neighbor contact {hmmm! Sometimes no neighbors}
- New Cases, New Deaths, PPE, VENTILATORS

*Meant for safety
but
Created Social
Disconnection*

Fact about isolation and loneliness

- ❖ Isolation is more than being alone.
- ❖ It's the result of feeling detached physically or psychologically,
- ❖ OR being disconnected from support groups of family, friends and community.
- ❖ Risk factor for premature death and risk for other health factors

CHANGES with isolation

First / Second / Third Surge

- ❖ Change in ability to process information
- ❖ May experience confusion
- ❖ May experience tunnel vision
- ❖ May experience tunnel thought (connects to memory deficits with some elderly)
- ❖ May lose swiftness in decision making
- ❖ May estimate the situation inappropriately
- ❖ May lead to depression or anxiety or suicidal ideation



- **Isolation**: anxiety and depression
- Loneliness: highly correlated to anxiety and depression
- Connectiveness: highly related to stress reduction, anxiety reduction, depression reduction
- **Anticipatory connectiveness**: What the elderly need assurances about



Loss - common with COVID

Loss or death of person/ relationships / who we are / were / **time** with someone



EVERETT

"If you live to be a 100, I want to live to be a 100 minus one day so I never have to live without you."

ROOMS - SPACE

After a death

DECREASE IN ABILITY TO PROCSS SPACE

THE ELDER LIVES IN

Broken Heart Syndrome

Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy



- The death of a loved one
- A frightening medical diagnosis
- Losing — or even winning — a lot of money
- Public speaking
- Job loss or financial difficulty
- Physical stressors such as an asthma attack, COVID-19 infection, a broken bone or major surgery

Feeling Components of Change and Loss of Contact

- Anger
 - Sadness
 - Irritability
 - Anhedonia loss of pleasure
-
- How do we help with actual contact or find a healthy substitute for face to face contact



Words of Loneliness	Words of Inclusion
Lack companionship	I'm in tune
No one I can turn to	I'm not alone / I don't feel alone
I no longer feel close	I have a group of friends
I'm left out	I have companions to call on / turn to
Everything is just superficial	Some(one/people) understand me
No one knows me / listens to me / talks to me	I can always find someone to talk to
I'm isolated	
I'm unhappy, I don't know why -	
I'm so unhappy	
I cry everyday	
Lots of people are around me, I'm still alone	

SOCIAL ISOLATION / LONELINESS

Promoting social connection / Public Health Messaging	STATE and Federal Agencies/Policies
Mobilizing family resources	Caretakers and Oversight Agencies
Community-based networks and resources	Community Action Programs
Developing innovative technology-based interventions + social connections + engaging health care systems	PRIVATE and PUBLIC Programs (other countries appear more responsive than it seems we do in rural America with technology)
IDENTIFYING Social Isolation	Caretakers – families -
IDENTIFYING Loneliness	Contact Persons
BARRIERS	Ageism, Transportation, Losses including access, Inequality, Rural setting, Poor Health +++++

a high level of social engagement is a key factor in achieving the individually and socially desired goal of 'successful aging'.

Gate-openers Against Social Isolation

- THE DAILY CHECK-IN (time / our or their task)
- Technology – connections
 - Video chatting – texting phones – laptops
 - Captioning apps for hearing challenged
- Homebound activities
 - Mail-carrier – neighbors – organizing pictures and reflecting on memories
 - Friends/families – check-ins –neighbor check-ins - cards and notes and letters
- Expand current circle of friends (if possible)
- Faith community continuation

What to do ! / ?



- Brain Chemicals
 - Improved by Touch- Food – EXERCISE – thoughts – Sleep (activity chart for home-bound with provider or caretaker check-in)
 - Exercise --- (memory)
 - Social Isolation or “Physical Distancing and not Social Isolation”
 - Prayer – Meditation – Inner-spiritual focus
- Sometimes our **Wise Woman or Wise Man** comes in handy

Some Ways to Handle Isolation (real or perceived)

- **Plan your Day!**
- **Take deep breaths/Practice deep breathing exercises** (creates STRUCTURE) (LOG THEM)
- Watch your thoughts / think positive (Fights anticipatory _____)
- Find time to relax and cool – chill-out - Chillax
- Read something inspirational

- **Repetitive mental images**
- Visualize what you WANT to happen / visualize WHO you want to experience / Plan safely
- Talk problems over with a friend or counselor or caregiver
- Eliminate a tendency to dwell on your weaknesses
and dwell on in-hand objects that trigger good memories
- Feel proud of accomplishments (Some elders need help with this)
- Exercise in some manner each day



MEMORY

BLANK

W
L
O
P
P
O
H
E

GOOD

MEMORIES

Self-Talk

- The question of Internal Dialogue that a person carries on with themselves all day long
- Negative self-talk can result in anxiety
- Positive self-talk encourages self-resilience, effective coping, and general well being
(write down the self-talk mantra)

“WHO DO YOU / WE HAVE – WHEN YOU / WE LOSE
CLIENTS – FRIENDS - FAMILY ? !”





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The Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale

- 1. I feel in tune with the people around me"
- 2. I lack companionship
- 3. There is no one I can turn to
- 4. I do not feel alone"
- 5. I feel part of a group of friends"
- 6. I have a lot in common with the people around me"
- 7. I am no longer close to anyone
- 8. My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me
- 9. I am an outgoing person"
- 10. There arc people I feel close to"
- 11. I feel left out
- 12. My social relationships arc superficial
- 13. No one really knows me well
- 14. I feel isolated from others
- 15. I can find companionship when I want it"
- 16. There are people who really understand me"
- 17. I am unhappy being so withdrawn
- 18. People are around me but not with me
- 19. There arc people I can talk to"
- 20. There are people I can turn to"

Scoring “Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale”

Directions: Indicate how often you feel the way described in each of the following statements. Circle State, Identify Which descriptor fits best

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often

" (Item should be reversed 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 19, 20)"
(i.e., 1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, 4 = 1) before scoring