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Ground Rules

- 
TIME
 90 minutes long
 May need to interrupt
- 
PARTICIPATION
 Is voluntary but,
 Best way to learn
- 
PRIVACY
 Said in the group,
 Stays in the group
- 
SURROUNDINGS
 Check screen visibility,
 Reduce noise
- 
IF DUTY CALLS
 Leave to do what you need
 Come back when you can

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Introductions




Your Name

Who you are caring for and their diagnosis


One thing you hope to learn from this workshop

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Today's Topics



Isolation



Staying Engaged



Support

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Isolation

- Even before the pandemic, social isolation was a threat to the well-being of older adults
- Social isolation and loneliness are considered a “serious public health risks”
- Pandemic has made this worse as places where people were able to connect have slowly dwindled

Loneliness is a key risk factor for:

- Alcoholism and drug use
- Alzheimer's disease progression
- Antisocial behavior
- Cardiovascular disease & stroke
- Decreased memory and learning
- Depression
- Increased stress levels
- Poor decision-making

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Loneliness and Isolation

Loneliness and Isolation are different, although they are often used instead of the other

Social isolation is the absence of social contact

Loneliness is feeling sadness or unease because you're alone

- Loneliness, according to many experts, is not necessarily about being alone
- Instead, you can feel alone and isolated, even when surrounded by lots of people
- Loneliness is both complex and unique to each person



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What is Social Connectedness?

Social connection is when you connect with other people, either in person or remotely

There are three important parts to social connection:

- How often and who you connect with
- The physical or emotional support you get from your connections
- How you feel about your connections
 - Whether you feel lonely or a sense of belonging

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Creating Social Connectedness

Create a Support Network

- Friends, family, peers, professionals

WHY:

- This network helps you to feel connected and less on your own

CAUTION:

- Diversify! Don't depend on just one connection point. The more connection points you have the better it can weather any disruptions.



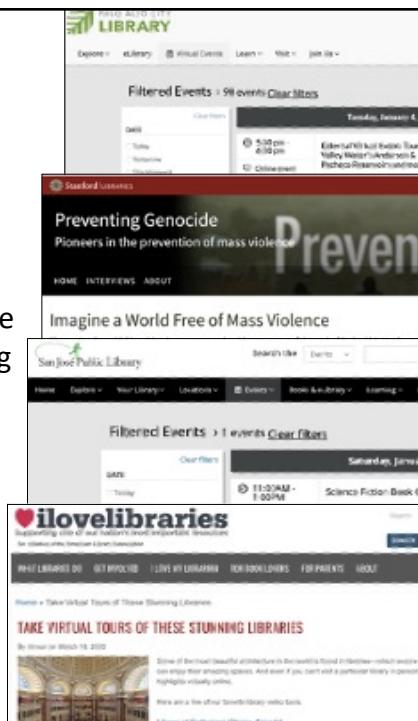
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Staying Engaged: Your Local Library

Local libraries have a variety of online offerings

- Book clubs
- Lectures on a variety of topics from science and literature to the practical like navigating Medicare
- Music: hosting a concert to record clubs exploring different artists
- Virtual tours

Many have offerings in other languages



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Staying Engaged: Senior Planet & Well Connected

Senior Planet by AARP

For more information:
<https://seniorplanet.org/locations/palo-alto/events/>



Well Connected by Covia

To download catalog or to check it out:
<https://covia.org/programs/well-connected/>



Televisit (not-for-profit)

For more information:
<http://www.televisit.org/>

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Staying Engaged: Virtual Tours

Come and tour places you've never thought you would get a chance to see!

- Grab a friend and go for a tour each from your own computer
- <https://teambuilding.com/blog/virtual-tours>



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Making Connections Online

- Helplines
- Online Support Groups
- Message Boards
- Social Media



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Where to go in a Crisis: Helplines / Hotlines

WHAT:

- Non-judgmental listening services for people in crisis
- Offered by telephone, may also be email, web or text support
- Can also offer access to information, services, and advice

WHY:

- Sometimes it can be very freeing to talk with someone who is completely objective
- Most are 24/7, so in the dead of the night when you are laying awake worrying it is nice to have someone to talk with

CAUTION:

- You are not guaranteed to talk to the same person every time



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Helplines for Caregivers

Institute on Aging Friendship Line (800-971-0016)

- 24-hour toll-free Friendship Line
- Founded in 1973, it is the only accredited crisis line for people aged 60 years and older, and adults living with disabilities

Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline (800-272-3900)

- 24/7, 365 days a year
- Specialists and master's-level clinicians offer confidential support and information
- Live chat from <https://www.alz.org/help-support/resources/helpline>

Caregiver Help Desk (855-227-3640)

- Caregiving experts are available 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM ET.
- Helps caregivers to find the right information needed to help navigate complex caregiving challenges.
- Live chat/email available from <https://caregiveraction.org/>

Check website of specific chronic illness foundations/associations.

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Support Groups

WHAT:

- Support groups focus on sharing personal experiences and feelings, coping strategies, or firsthand information

WHY:

- Feel less alone
- Source of practical advice

CAUTION:

- You may need to try out a variety of support groups until you find one that fits you



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Support Groups: Pros and Cons



PROs:

- Feeling less lonely or isolated
- Improving skills to cope with challenges
- Improving understanding of a disease
- Learning about health, economic or social resources



CONs:

- Not helpful for everyone
- Many groups do not do problem solving
- Some can end up leaving you feeling worse than when you arrived
- No way of knowing if material offered is evidence-based

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Finding a Group That Fits

- Understand the Format
- Manage Expectations
- Cost Involved
- Don't Have to Stay
- Keep an Open Mind



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Where to Find a Support Group

Family Caregiver Alliance offers an emailing list style support for caregivers caring for persons with all types of chronic illnesses

<https://www.caregiver.org/connecting-caregivers/support-groups/>

Well Spouse Association open for all chronic illnesses <https://wellspouse.org/>

Looking for something local and in-person?

- Check out the major organizations for the illness of the person you are caring for

American Heart Association <https://www.stroke.org/en/stroke-support-group-finder>

Michael J Fox Foundation <https://www.michaeljfox.org/news/support-groups>

Alzheimer's Association https://www.alz.org/events/event_search

Lewy Body Dementia Association <https://www.lbda.org/local-support-groups/>

Find your local **Area on Aging**. <https://www.n4a.org/>

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Online Message Boards

WHAT:

- Online message boards serves the same goals of a support group without the structure of attending a once a week 'event'
- Available 24/7 you post your question or share an answer on your schedule

WHY:

- Along with feeling less alone & being a source of practical advice online message boards are available when you need them

CAUTION:

- You don't know who is offering the advice so make sure you verify the information before you use it!



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Message Boards

AARP Community (AARP)

- For all caregivers
- Don't have to be a member
- Variety of forums including a set specifically for caregivers – caregiver tips, knowledge base articles, chat, plus more

<https://community.aarp.org/>



ALZ Connected

(Alzheimer's Association)

- Alzheimer's & other Dementias
- Patients, CGs, Family, Friends, and others

<https://www.alzconnected.org/>

FCA/Smart Patients

(Family Caregiving Alliance / Smart Patients)

- For caregivers of adults with chronic physical or cognitive conditions

<https://www.smartpatients.com/partners/fca>

Care Community

(Caregiver Action Network)

- Browse without signing up, but to post need to join
- Specific forums for Alzheimer's, Huntington's, Parkinson's, & COPD, plus more online forums

<https://caregiveraction.org/community>



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Social Media - Facebook

WHAT:

- Facebook has many private support groups, some have been around for years
- Providing support & advice, many caregivers find them very helpful

WHY:

- Facebook is a media that many are already familiar with

CAUTION:

- There is no guarantee of privacy on Facebook. While these groups do make an effort to protect their members, the very nature of Facebook can at times work against them.



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Facebook Caregiver Groups for All Caregivers

Caregiver Nation

For family caregivers to share information, empathy, understanding, and resources to support caregivers.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/122999778390804>



Working Daughter

This is for women who are balancing caring for an aging parent with their career.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/workingdaughter/>

Caregiver Space Community

Offers a variety of private Facebook groups. Group by specific caregiver type, these private Facebook groups are part of Caregiver Space.org and open to any caregiver.

<https://thecaregiverspace.org/>



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Facebook Caregiver Groups for Dementia

Memory People

They bring real-time Support to patients, caregivers, advocates, family members and professionals who are dealing with Alzheimer's / dementia or any memory impairment.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/180666768616259?ref=pages_group_cta



Activity

- 15 new posts
323 in the last 24 hours
- 25,026 total members
+ 32 in the last 24 hours
- Created 11 years ago

The Purple Sherpa Basecamp: Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group

This is a place to share what we've learned as care-partners, to vent and support one another, and to break the silence that leaves so many caregivers feeling alone.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ThePurpleSherpaBasecamp/>

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Take Away

- Staying socially connected is important to staying healthy, happy, and keep your mind sharp.
- There are multiple ways you can stay connected using the internet.
- Support Groups come in many shapes and sizes and can help you feel less alone and serve as sources of practical advice.

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Making This Work for You


Pick One

Pick One New Activity to do with others to add each week to my weekly schedule



Find a Support Group or Message Board to join. Stay for at least a few meetings or a week to get a feel for the group or message board.



Set a Deadline	Why this one?	What will you pair it with?	Optional Break it Down	Reminders	Run into Problems Getting it Done?
Be realistic in your deadline.	How will this help you?	Do with something you already do.	Take a large tasks & break it into steps.	Phone Alarms Post-Its Tape to Mirror	 ID the issue Brainstorm solutions Try it out