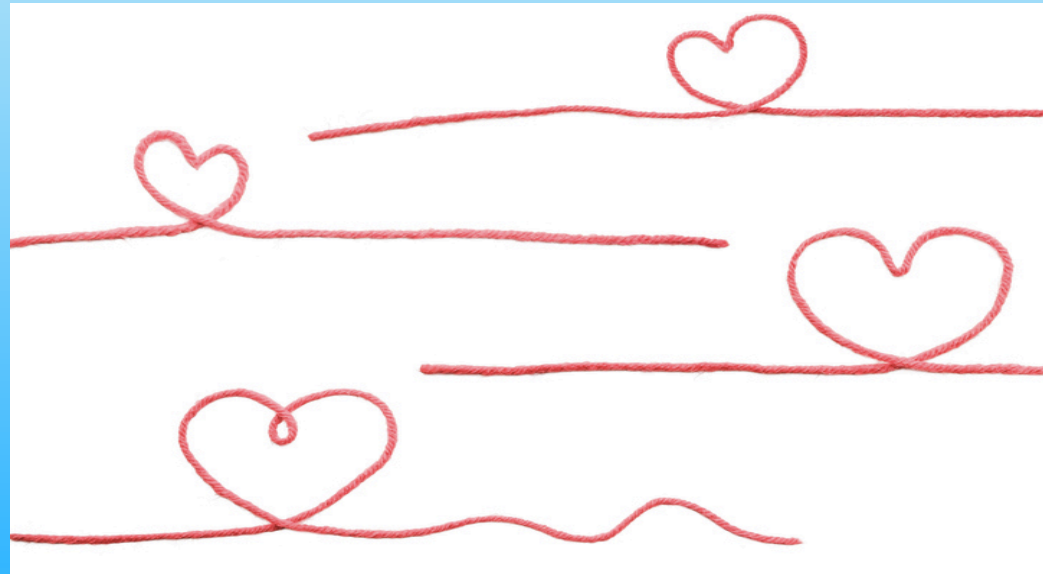


# STAYING MENTALLY HEALTHY: PREVENTING LONELINESS WHILE PHYSICAL DISTANCING



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# CONTENTS



Definitions



Effects



Strategies



Resources

# ALONENESS ≠ LONELINESS ≠ DEPRESSION



Aloneness or solitude is a state of being by one's self; can be restorative



Loneliness is a painful emotional state that involves the desire for connection that is not occurring



Depression is a medical condition that involves a suppression of the systems that foster connection

QUARANTINE TIME

EXTROVERT PEOPLE



INTROVERT PEOPLE



# EFFECTS

- Through evolution, we survived better in groups so loneliness motivates us to stay together
- Staying socially satisfied helps boost heart and circulatory function, sleep patterns, immunity and cognitive function<sup>3</sup> while reducing risk of other mental health disorders like depression
- Fear of loneliness can lead us to tolerate unsafe behaviors or relationships



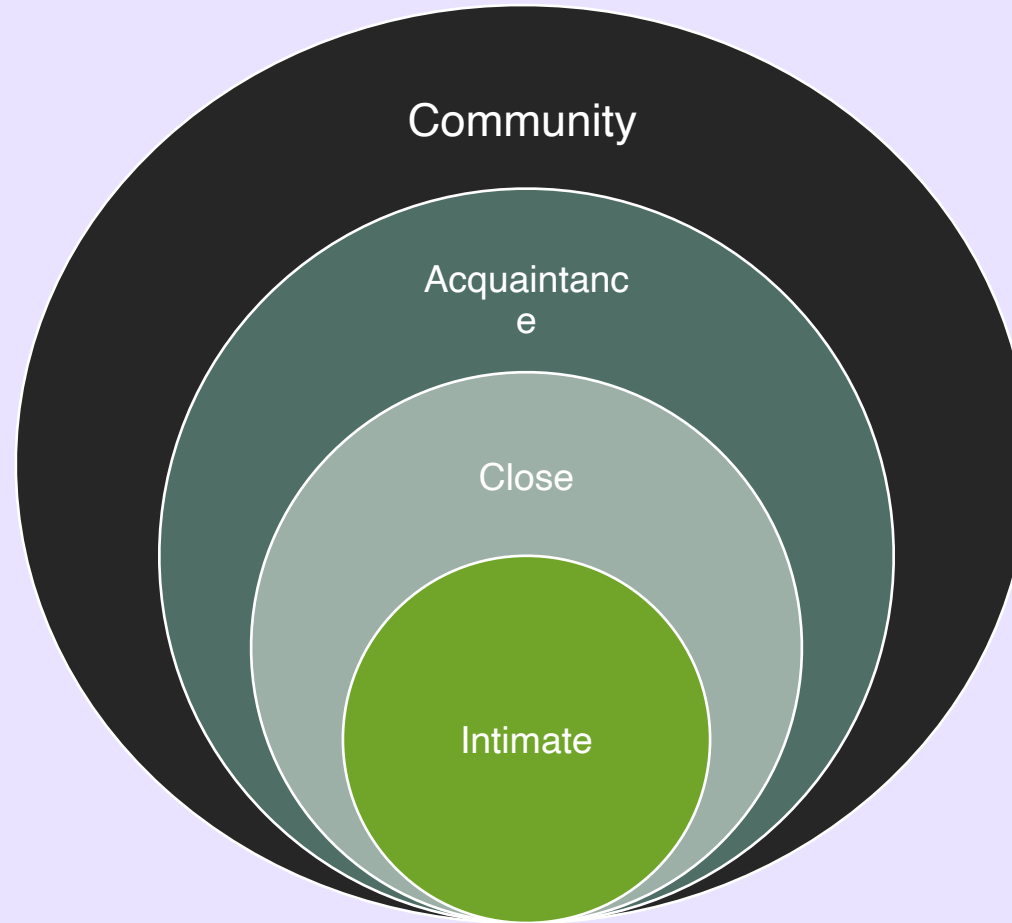
# STRATEGIES

KNOW YOURSELF!

Then you know what you can offer!



# MAP YOUR CONNECTIONS



- Move connections in and out of circles as needed
- Find a new way to connect with loved ones-e.g. Facetime parties
- Think about who else could benefit from a greeting or act of service?

FEELING SHY?

ACCEPT YOUR FLAWS  
AND TAKE A RISK



WE'RE ALL FEELING  
UNCERTAIN RIGHT NOW



“Because true belonging only happens when we present our authentic, imperfect selves to the world..”



“Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they're never weakness.”<sup>2</sup>



The Restorative Community...comes from the choice to value possibility and relatedness over problems...”<sup>1</sup>



# RESOURCES



In isolationship

Today

When We Can't Be Face to  
Face....

## Connecting about Loneliness and Staying Positive

- [www.webofloneliness.com](http://www.webofloneliness.com)
- [www.hopecafe.net](http://www.hopecafe.net)
- Numerous introvert and social anxiety chat rooms

## Feeding Your Sense of Touch

- hug a stuffy at the same time as a distant loved one
- Describe a sensation to another
- Reminisce about a time you felt nurtured
- [www.thehealthy.com/home-remedies/self-massage/?\\_cmp=stf](http://www.thehealthy.com/home-remedies/self-massage/?_cmp=stf)

## Connecting with Seniors With & Without Technology

- Seniors' Centre Without Walls 780-395-2626 (currently full)
- "Dear Senior"-long term care letter writing campaign
- Snail Mail, recipe and affirmation exchanges
- Take a go-pro video drive for them
- Phone or Facetime reading buddies
- Help connect to call-in radio shows or pod-casts
- Do a sing-a-long or poetry reading by phone
- Adult bedtime stories on meditation apps
- Replace what you do in space with what you do in time to just have a sense of presence-e.g. talk while cooking, explain what doing

## General Resources for Connecting

- [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) -many have gone virtual
- [www.facebook.com/groups/209788323463176/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/209788323463176/) --matching needs and purpose
- Community apps or social media—Next door, St. Albert Chat, St. Albert Community Pages, city of St. Albert Neighborhood Connectors
- Learn something new
- Online worship services
- Community games/projects—e.g. charity fundraisers
- RECC grief group and mom's groups

We don't have a word for the opposite of loneliness,  
but if we did,

I could say that's what I want in life....

It's not quite love and it's not quite community;  
it's just this feeling that there are people,  
an abundance of people,  
who are in this together.

Who are on your team.

When the check is paid and you stay at the table.

When it's four a.m. and no one goes to bed.

That night with the guitar.

That night we can't remember.

That time we did,

we went,

we saw,

we laughed,

we felt.

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