

LET NO ONE BE ALONE

Reaching out and connecting with older adults
to reduce isolation and loneliness



RESOURCE 2

SEVEN Genuine Ways to Connect When Reaching Out to Someone Who is Isolated



Familiar and supportive ways to reduce isolation include a phone call, letter, or visit to those who we know may feel lonely.

Let's challenge ourselves to ask:

What are ways that we can add greater value to that gesture — beyond a one-time effort?

Here are some examples:

1. Sam **writes a letter** to a friend on the first day of each month.
2. Every evening, Tanya **calls a friend** who lives with short-term memory loss so that her friend hears from her daily.
3. Anna is hesitant to **ask for help** with her computer as her speech is unclear because of neurological problems. Suko who lives with

multiple sclerosis is matched with Anna as her computer coach. Anna feels more comfortable asking Suko for help as Suko also experiences neurological challenges.

4. Paulo's friend José requires full-time care by his wife Maria. Paulo **provides respite** by visiting José **one afternoon a week** so that Maria, who feels isolated by her care-giving, can visit friends or family or go shopping. Paulo is taking a turn with someone who cannot be left alone.

5. Louis has been designated as a friendly caller to others in his faith community. When he first talks with someone, Louis **gently ask questions** to find out as much as he can about who they are, and what's important in their current life and in past decades. Louis keeps notes. This helps him create discussion topics for the next call.



6. **The Red Cross Friendly Calls** program pairs a trained Red Cross volunteer with an older adult who is feeling isolated or lonely, who may have limited social and family connections, or feels

There are 5 **LET NO ONE BE ALONE** resources. All 5 resources can be found on the SSM website: skseniorsmechanism.ca

Watch SSM's Facebook page through the year for suggestions about dealing with social isolation, and check for posts every January for Let No One Be Alone Week: skseniorsmechanism. Please repost on your Facebook page! Thank you!



YOU could be the reason someone feels **seen, heard, and respected** today.



RESOURCE 2

they could benefit from more social interaction. Through regular phone calls and meaningful conversations, connections can develop and feelings of loneliness and isolation may be reduced. To learn more about this program, please contact Red Cross Friendly Calls at 306-721-1635 or by email at friendlyvisitingsask@redcross.ca To hear & see more about this program, click on: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CWY4s0aFblq/>

7. Many older adults are familiar with technology and enjoy surfing the web and connecting by video chat or social media. Connecting by video chat enables each person to observe how the other seems to be doing. With a tablet or cell-phone, an isolated person can also take photos that could clarify a problem they're having, such as a sore on their arm or challenging thermostat controls.

However, not all have digital capability. Ponder who in your community has not had access or has resisted learning about cell phones or tablets or computers? Might this be the winter to encourage them to give it a try with help? Who is the best match to coach this person? Is it you? an enthusiastic student? or a peer of their own age who can understand their fears about learning something new?

For those that are new to digital technology, many organizations including local libraries throughout Saskatchewan offer courses to help out.



The Saskatoon Council on Aging (SCOA) offers technology support with 3 programs:

- Students teach technology through Zoom in the “Senior & Youth Connect” program at <https://scoa.ca/seniors-and-youth-connect-project/>.
- The “Socially Connecting Seniors” program includes both telephone buddies and an iPad lending library at <https://scoa.ca/socially-connecting-seniors/>.
- Tech Buddy is an in-person program that matches older adults and high school students. Info at: 306-652-2255.

The Lifelong Learning Centre at the University of Regina offers online classes to assist in learning about technology. This winter's offerings include: iPad 1, Social Media Basics, and Media Streaming. Info at: 306-585-5766. Check out: <https://www.uregina.ca/cce/personal-enrichment/current-courses/comp-tech.html>.

Think about how you can make a genuine connection when reaching out to someone who is isolated.

Access the 5 **LET NO ONE BE ALONE** resources: