

LET NO ONE BE ALONE

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



RESOURCE 3

Six

Meaningful Ways to Connect While Providing Others an Opportunity to Contribute



1. Rosa lives in longterm care and is almost completely dependent on health care staff for her physical needs. However, she can speak and pick up her land-line phone and press keys. Five days a week, she calls a different member of her faith community who lives on their own to check how they are doing and to catch up on community news. It's her new 'job'. Her faith community's visitation committee chose to engage Rosa to make the calls rather than to ask a younger member of the community to call Rosa once a week.

We know that the opportunity to volunteer allows us to step away from our own troubles. Making a contribution to our communities boosts confidence, breaks isolation, and enables us to expand our view of the world and our place in it.

2. Fred, who is in late 80s, decided that every two weeks, he would call all his friends that are older than him. Fred asks a specific question: "How are you TODAY?" Fred focuses on today, not "since we last talked", not "this week", but rather "How are you TODAY?" At this moment.

3. Paul decided to phone someone he knows who is in every decade of life (from under age 10 to over 100) . Paul asks two questions to start the conversation: What is challenging today? What are you thankful for today? At the end of the call, he asks each person he talks with to call one of their friends whose age is in a different decade.

The phone calls initiated by Fred and Paul engage the person they are calling and themselves in a mutual way. They are not just someone doing something for someone else.

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 3



Paul and Fred make sure they get to respond to those questions from their perspective, too, which helps meet their own needs for connection with others.

4. How can we deepen phone calls between friends? Rather than asking: How are you? What did you watch on TV last night?, how about a prompt list by the phone of topics that you could discuss together during several phone calls. What's your favourite memory of winter as a child? What did our parents or grandparents do to survive and thrive in The Thirties or during the War Years? Did you ever hear stories of the 1918 Pandemic? What historical events did you live through and what was their impact on you? What positive traits did you inherit from your parents or other family members? What events had the greatest impact on your life? Who were the people that most influenced you? What was the most difficult time in your life? When things got tough, where did you find support and comfort?

5. Read parts of a local history book with someone else. This could be the history of a geographical community, a faith community, or a long-standing organization. Do you now view that history in a different way? What would each of you add to that story that was not recorded, or is about the present? How can you record your memories for future historical records?

Encourage each other “to frame” or talk about your past experiences of how you or your family or your organization overcame hardships and thrived rather than how you were a victim of a challenging time. **A good story from the past that tells of resilience helps us meet current challenges.**

6. Become involved with: Bell Let's Talk Day. Bell Let's Talk is a wide-reaching, multi-year program created by a Canadian telecommunications company. The event is designed to break the silence around mental illness and to support mental health all across Canada. Here's some ways you can get involved with Bell Let's Talk as part of Let No One Be Alone week. <https://letstalk.bell.ca/en/ways-to-help>



Think about how you can make meaningful connections while providing others an opportunity to contribute!

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

