

DIAL NORTH

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Social Isolation + Loneliness
- The Power of "Yes!"
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"True belonging doesn't require that we **change** who we are; it requires that we **be** who we are." - Brené Brown

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Winters in Northern B.C. can bring up mixed feelings for people. For some, it is a time where there is discomfort all around, from wet socks to enveloping darkness. For others, it's a wonderland, a time to get out and enjoy various winter sports, celebrate the holidays and slow down.

For older adults, winter weather and darker days can have impacts on physical, mental, and emotional well-being. These changes can demotivate one from wanting to socialize, go shopping, exercise and walk, and even visit loved ones. Particularly if one lives alone, outside city limits, and with little social supports. This demotivation can increase risks of loneliness for older adults.

According to the CDC, loneliness is associated with increase risk of heart disease and stroke, depression, anxiety, and thoughts of suicide.

Loneliness is also associated with a higher risk of dementia, heart failure and premature death.

Loneliness is a feeling of being alone, regardless of the amount of social contact one has.

The changing of seasons can be a motivator to increase our mindfulness of the lives we live and how we feel. As we move forward in life, our health, relationships, and sense of well-being can dramatically change.

To mitigate undesired effects of these changes, it is vital that we actively work towards cultivating a life that brings us joy. Spending time alone can be a way to recharge, reflect, and reconnect with ourselves. Spending time with others can be a way to relate, rejoice, and rediscover meaning and value in life.

Through all the turmoil we face in the world, we need to remember each other and try our best to be inclusive, empathetic, and choose kindness. Ask curious questions, notice each other, and try to see what might be going on below the surface.

source: <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/publications/features/lonely-older-adults.html>



THE POWER OF YES

BY GLEN NICHOLSON

When I contemplated retirement, friends warned, “You’ll be busier after you retire.” This made no sense. I resolved to prove them wrong. I eliminated all appointments from my calendar and refused to commit to anything. I yearned to be stress-free, to lie in the meadow and hear the grass sing; and perchance, to fall asleep in the sunshine.

Alas, I failed. The phone rang. Old friends reappeared. Social engagements proliferated. Recreational opportunities abounded. People asked me to volunteer. I was saddled with a tyranny of choices. My calendar filled again; events, deadlines, responsibilities!

How did this happen?

At age thirteen, I moved with my family to a new town. The doorbell rang. Five neighbourhood kids asked if I wanted to play football with them. I had never thrown a football and was afraid to embarrass myself, so I declined. Two days later, they returned and invited me to play Kick the Can. I didn’t know the rules and said, “no thanks.”

My father observed, “if you don’t say yes, they will stop asking.” He was right. Social isolation defined my teenage years.

Years later, a retired Olympian invited me to ski with him. I was a hacker but I said, “Yes.” Soon, he was teaching me the finer points of skiing. A strong cyclist lent me a mountain bike and introduced me to forest trails. A group of runners welcomed me to join a triathlon team. A paddling club conscripted me as president. A trail builder asked me to help maintain bike and ski trails. I was invited to sing in an opera. And so on.

I don’t really excel at anything. Yet friends never complain if I hold them back. I always thank them for being patient with me, and I continue learning and growing.

Nowadays, I invite others to ski, bike, paddle, or build trails with me.

It starts with “YES!”

WORKSHOPS

Our training includes skills training, healthy coping, communication, peer support, and education to prevent and respond to crisis and suicide.

Reaching Out

- This workshop introduces the topic of suicide to youth and teaches about warning signs, that it's okay to talk about suicide, how participants can respond to suicide, and advises participants it is okay to ask for help and to connect with a safe adult.

Self-Care 101

- A central goal of this workshop is to invite youth to see that each of us has mental health and, similar to caring for our physical health, we can learn to nurture and improve our mental health through our actions, experiences, and lifestyle choices.

GRASP

- This 12-hour skill building program provides youth from Grades 9-12 with self-awareness, communication, and coping skills that will aid them in their personal growth as well as contribute to an overall plan for ongoing youth suicide prevention programs within schools and communities.

COPE

- This workshop uses the principals of mindfulness to help students in grades 5,6,7 achieve better mental wellness and cope with issues like anxiety, overthinking, stress, self-harm, sleep loss, and social media use.

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)

- Living Works' two day, interactive workshop that prepares caregivers to provide suicide life-assisting first-aid intervention.

suicideTALK

- Ranging from 90 minutes to a half a day, Living Works' suicideTALK invites all participants to become more aware of suicide prevention opportunities in their community.

Safe (Suicide Awareness For Everyone) TALK

- Living Works' three-hour workshop which prepares helpers to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first-aid resources.

Contact our **Community Education Coordinator** at
community.education@crisis-
centre.ca or 778.693.2765 for more
information!

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ **UPCOMING TRAINING:** ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Being a Volunteer Changes Your Life!

It gives you a new perspective and a new way of looking at your own problems when you have a chance to understand others. The training is invaluable for your own communication skills and relationships.

The Crisis Prevention, Intervention, and Information Centre for Northern B.C. offers training ~3 times per year based on demand.

Visit: <https://crisis-centre.ca/volunteer-upcoming-training/>



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: Older Adults

Elder Citizens Recreation Association

- a non-profit charitable organization for members, guests and drop-ins. Call (250) 561-9381 for more information.

Better At Home by United Way

- allows volunteers to be connected with seniors in their region who need help with grocery shopping, meal prep and prescription pick-up or receive friendly check-in call/visit. Call 604-268-1312.

Choose to Move

- In this free program, you work with a trained activity coach who helps you develop a plan made just for you. When it gets tough, you will have the support from your coach and a group of other seniors, who, just like you, are making a choice for health. 604-875-4111 ext 21787

Other useful links:

BC Senior's Guide:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/people/seniors/about-seniorsbc/guide/bc-seniors-guide-12th-edition.pdf>

CMHA - Coping with Loneliness

<https://cmha.bc.ca/documents/coping-with-loneliness/>

Our Centre offers a program called New Horizons. It's a friendly phone call offered to older adults living in the Northern B.C. area. Call us at 250-563-1214 for more information.

..... Crisis Centre for Northern B.C.: Resources

- Northern B.C. Crisis Line: **250-563-1214, 1-888-562-1214**, 24/7
- Northern B.C. Youth Line: **250-564-8336**, 24/7
- BC Suicide Line: **1-800-784-2433**, BC-wide, 24/7
- 310-MENTALHEALTH: **310-6789**, BC-wide, 24/7
- Canada Suicide Prevention Service: **1-833-456-4566**, National, 24/7



**Crisis Prevention,
Intervention & Information Centre
FOR NORTHERN BC**

We are here for you 24-7

Crisis Prevention, Intervention, & Information Centre for Northern B.C.

#101-2700 Queensway, Prince George B.C., V2N 1L2

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