

»» Passages «« Mindful Connections



MENTAL HEALTH IN OLDER ADULTS

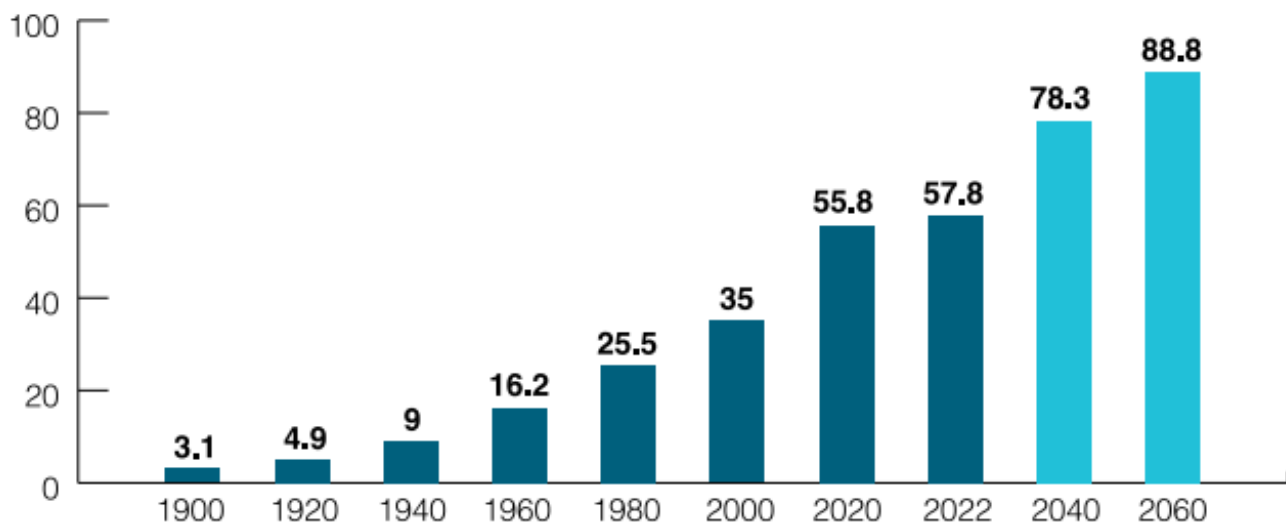
»» Our newsletter is dedicated to raising awareness of the various mental health concerns affecting older adults aged 60 and above. By examining a wide array of topics related to mental health and providing essential resources, we aim to offer significant support to those facing these challenges.

According to a report from the Administration for Community Living's Administration on Aging, approximately 28 percent of older adults in the United States—equating to 13.8 million individuals—live alone. The population of adults aged 65 and older is on the rise, with many grappling with social isolation and persistent feelings of loneliness. As individuals age, they may experience prolonged periods of solitude. This extended isolation can render older adults particularly susceptible to feelings of loneliness and social disconnection, which can negatively impact their mental health and overall well-being.

➤➤➤ While related, social isolation and loneliness are distinct concepts. Social isolation refers to the absence of social contact, whereas loneliness encompasses the distressing feeling of being alone or disconnected from others. It is possible to live alone without experiencing loneliness or social isolation; conversely, an individual can feel lonely even in the company of others.

Recently, the University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging surveyed adults aged 50 to 80 regarding their experiences of loneliness and social interactions. The findings indicated that loneliness was more prevalent among women and particularly common among individuals with compromised physical and mental health. Those reporting fair or poor mental health exhibited heightened feelings of social isolation (77%), a lack of companionship (73%), and infrequent social contact (56%). Furthermore, individuals with health conditions or disabilities that limited daily activities, as well as those who were unemployed, lived alone, or fell within the 50 to 64 age range, were more likely to experience these feelings compared to their counterparts aged 65 to 80 years.

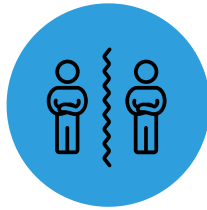
**Number of Persons Age 65 and Older, 1900 - 2060
(numbers in millions)**



Note: 2040 and 2060 are projections

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census, Population Estimates and Projections

Factors that can increase the likelihood of developing loneliness and social isolation



Separation
from friends
or family



Caring for a
loved one



Feeling a lack
of purpose



Lack of social
support



Language
barriers



Psychological
or cognitive
challenges

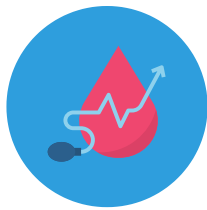


Inability to
leave home
without help

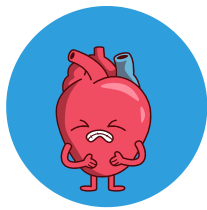


Financial
struggles

Higher risk of developing:



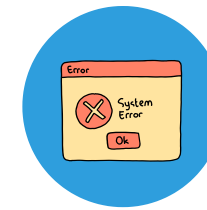
High blood
pressure



Heart disease



Obesity



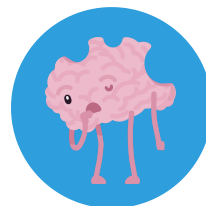
Weakened
immune
function



Anxiety



Depression



Cognitive
decline



Dementia,
including
Alzheimer's
disease

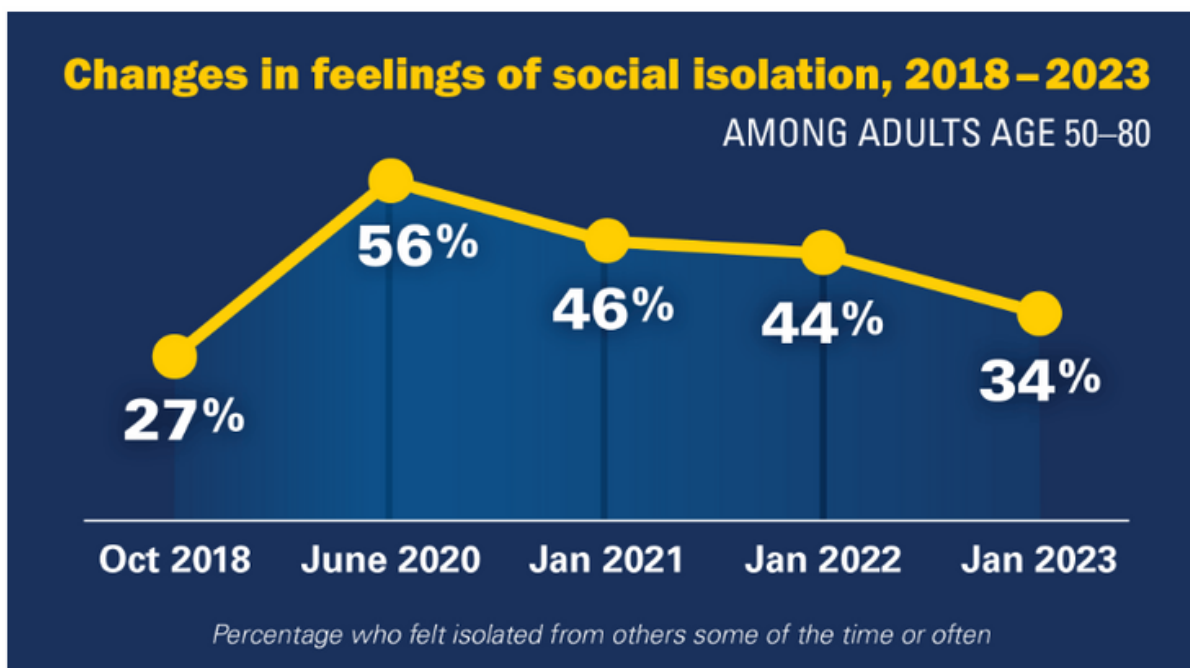
“Loneliness acts as a fertilizer for other diseases.”

Dr. Steve Cole, Professor of Medicine and Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences in the
UCLA School of Medicine

»»» COVID-19 EFFECT «««

The COVID-19 pandemic had significantly exacerbated social isolation among older adults, particularly affecting those living in their own homes and residents of skilled nursing facilities. Many countries implemented stay-at-home orders and restricted visits to nursing homes, which contributed to this increased isolation. Before the pandemic, a substantial number of elderly individuals actively participated in social activities.

As you can see in the photo below, more than doubled of adults age 50-80 reported feeling of social isolation in June 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic compared to 2018.



Graph by University Of Michigan

Since the pandemic, there has been mitigations to combat social isolation and loneliness. First, is breaking the digital divide. Most older adults do not have access to affordable internet or devices. As part of California's Master Plan on Aging, the California Department of Aging was able to provide 4,000 tablets with connectivity to older adults and adults with disabilities through the Connections, Health, Aging and Technology (CHAT) Pilot Program. Second, is the Affordable Connectivity Program that ensures that households can afford broadband.

➤➤➤ HOW TO GET HELP ‹‹‹

Engaging in a dialogue with your doctor about your health necessitates open communication regarding your physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Providing detailed information, including all symptoms, allows for accurate diagnosis of any issues. Furthermore, being forthcoming about your health habits and current life circumstances enables your healthcare provider to evaluate your medical conditions and emotional health with greater accuracy.



➤➤➤ TIPS TO COMBAT LONELINESS ‹‹‹ AND SOCIAL ISOLATION

- Find an activity you enjoy.
- Schedule time each day to stay in touch with family, friends and neighbors.
- Consider adopting a pet.
- Stay physically active.
- Check out resources and programs at your local social service agencies, community and senior centers, and public libraries.
- Join a cause and get involved in your community.
- Adequate sleep.



Chico State Enterprises
Passages
Volunteer Services



Who are we?

The Medical Chaperone Project offers door-through-door chaperoning services to medical appointments and outpatient procedures, provides supportive and ongoing training to volunteers, and offers support to clients before, during, and after their medical appointments.



Who are we?

The Senior Companion Program offers an opportunity to Give the Gift of Friendship by becoming companions to older adults wanting to remain independent and living in their homes.



Who are we?

Foster Grandparents are role models, mentors, and friends to children with exceptional needs. The program provides a way for volunteers age 55 and over to stay active by serving children and youth in their communities.



Who are we?

The AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP program pairs community volunteers aged 55 and older with partner organizations creating change in communities across Butte County.

»»» ACTION BEFORE MOTIVATION «««

Action leads to motivation, not the other way around. Any action is better than no action at all. Stop waiting for motivation, and start motivating yourself.

Healthy IDEAS

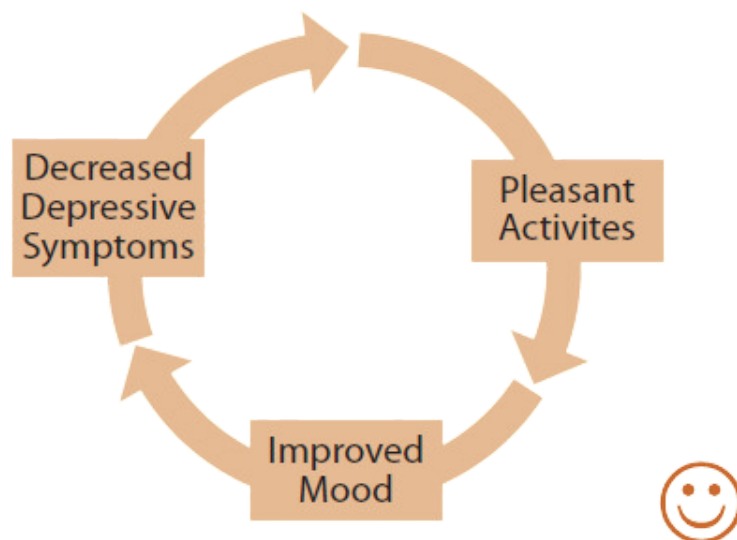
Connections presents Healthy IDEAS (Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors), an evidence-based program for older adults that integrates depression awareness and management into case management services.

Here's how it works:

Screening and assessment for depression
Education on depression and treatment
Referral and linkage to treatment
Behavioral Activation

Disclaimer: We are not diagnosing or providing treatment for depression.

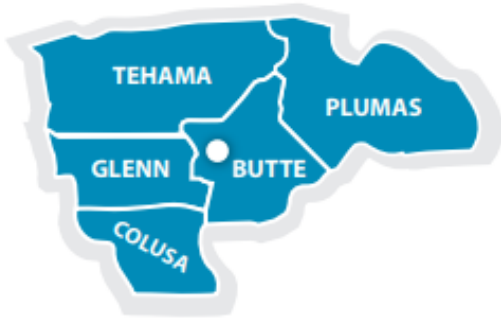
Better Mood and
Fewer Depressive Symptoms





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Serving California's Northern Region



Passages is funded by the California Department of Aging.
Connections is funded through the CA Department of Aging and the Mental Health Services Act.

All of our services are free of charge regardless of ability to pay. However, your donations are welcome and returned to our budget to help offer more services.

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of \$_____

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This gift is ☐ **In Honor of** ☐ **In Memory of**

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