



Connecting with Socially Isolated Seniors

Patricia Osage

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Nothing causes seniors to experience a greater decline in health and emotional well-being than social isolation. Producing more than just feelings of loneliness and hopelessness, social isolation makes seniors less safe, puts them at greater risk for financial, emotional, or physical abuse, and may contribute to rapid deterioration. This book offers service providers valuable tools for combating these negative outcomes.

Written in concise, easy-to-understand language, this resource will help you identify seniors in the community and in residential care whose health and well-being are in jeopardy. Learn to recognize the symptoms of social isolation and find concrete suggestions for reaching out to those living in your community but not thriving in it. Based on decades of experience with individuals living in senior housing, the book focuses on ways to address 10 factors that lead to social isolation, including:

Physical health problems and disabilities

Behavioral and cognitive health issues

Gender disparities

Loss of partner, friends, and pets

Minority sexual orientation

Language barriers

Validated by research, *Connecting with Socially Isolated Seniors* includes findings from a large survey of older adults living in independent senior housing communities and from focus groups conducted with senior caregivers, service coordinators, and activities directors. This resulting guide highlights the role of empathy and an inclusive attitude when exploring seniors' needs and the importance of getting to know each older adult as a unique human being to be effective in supporting those who live alone. Facts, checklists, and a quiz help to easily identify individuals who are at risk for social isolation. Additionally, practical How to Help sections show how to intervene with specific, actionable suggestions.

Community-based senior housing providers, assisted living communities, area agencies on aging, and other state and regional aging services organizations will find *Connecting with Socially Isolated Seniors* to be an invaluable addition to their staff resources.

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