



# Positive health through social connectedness

## BELONG - TRUST - CARE

### WAYS TO PROMOTE SOCIAL HEALTH AND CONNECTEDNESS

- Promote your sense of purpose by practising hobbies that really interest you.
- Arrange transportation with family or friends to be able to get out.
- Maintain attendance at your place of worship as you may benefit from the social interaction that weekly worship provides.
- Take care of a pet or plant as the act of nurturing can relieve feelings of social isolation.
- Maintain a positive body image by accepting compliments, accepting the effects of old age on your body, but also providing positive comments to other seniors.
- Go for regular hearing and vision tests as untreated hearing problems may lead to avoidance of social situations.
- Make use of adaptive technologies such as walkers or hearing aids, which can compensate for age-related constraints that can limit social interaction.
- Dine with others or start a supper club, as eating can be a social activity!
- Address incontinence issues by seeking support to address issues around incontinence.
- Ask for extra support if you have recently lost a spouse – from friends, family, neighbours or healthcare professionals, to avoid becoming socially isolated.
- Consult a public health professional if you are feeling lonely, and ask for advice.
- If available make use of online social networking (internet) to connect with friends, family or social support groups.
- Become an agent for successful aging! Look after yourself, but also be vigilant with regards to looking after your fellow elders.

#### Johannesburg

Unisa Institute for Social and Health Sciences

Phone: 011 857 1142

#### Cape Town

MRC-Unisa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit

Phone: 021 938 0441

Photograph courtesy of Sean Wilson Photography  
(seanwilson.co.za)