



## *Research Outcomes & Next Steps*

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## BACKGROUND

The Fresh Outlook Foundation (FOF) received funding from the federal New Horizons for Seniors program in 2022 to expand its HEADS UP Community Mental Health educational programming to include materials created for seniors by seniors. Phase 1 included qualitative research through various focus groups to determine seniors' primary:



- mental health and well-being strategies
- mental health issues and challenges
- types of information they want and need to inform and inspire better mental health
- existing and preferred mechanisms/channels for receiving info.



The information presented in charts starting on page 4 highlights input gathered during the five focus groups:

- FG 1: Senior women at the Schubert Seniors Centre in Vernon, BC (19 ranging from 60-93)
- FG 2: Senior men and women living in Coldstream Meadows residence (12 ranging from 75-95)
- FG 3: Senior men at the Schubert Centre in Vernon, BC (9 ranging from 62-75)
- FG 4: Senior men and women living in Abbeyfield residence, (10 ranging from 60 to 88)
- FG 5: Senior women community leaders in home setting (7 ranging from 58 to 75).

See Appendix for detailed focus group outcomes.

Focus groups were facilitated by FOF founder and CEO Jo de Vries, a public engagement specialist with 30 years experience facilitating focus groups and developing outreach and educational materials to reflect outcomes.

Scribes for the two formal focus groups were five grade 11 students from Students Without Borders



Academy in Vernon. These young women interacted meaningfully and productively with the seniors by asking questions, sharing stories of relationships with their grandparents, and pointing out how seniors could better connect with younger demographics. Students and seniors both “loved” the experience, which supports the argument for enhanced intergenerational communication and connection to support seniors’ mental health.

## OVERARCHING OBSERVATIONS

- Participants rely on medical professionals and systems to provide information about seniors’ mental health. With the



lack of access to health care and mental health professionals, seniors often turn to discussions with family and friends, as well as printed and digital resources. Although many local senior- and mental health-focused organizations provide mental health

resources, they were not mentioned by name as sources regularly used.

- While printed and digital tools/resources are important in the educational mix, most seniors in the focus groups said they prefer face-to-face opportunities that build awareness while fostering social connection. These include support groups, coffee shop meetings, workshops, community events, and facilitated discussion groups within seniors' residences.
- Whatever the resources or events offered, participants agree storytelling is the best way to inform, inspire, and mobilize seniors' mental health and well-being. When asked, they also agreed that stories combined with facts, statistics, and input from medical professionals would be the most compelling and transformative materials IF they are clear (written in laymen's language), concise, and available in accessible, credible, and user-friendly platforms.
- When asked, they also supported the approach of creating educational materials created "for seniors by seniors," whether they be trained volunteers or paid professionals. They believed a shared seniors' perspective would ensure more compelling and inspiring materials that would resonate more deeply with this demographic.

- The men in our focus groups were clear about the need for men to start talking about their mental health in safe environments that enable and encourage face-to-face sharing.

### **NEXT STEPS**

With the budget remaining from its NHS grant, FOF will:

- Share qualitative results with local, provincial, and national seniors' and mental health-focused agencies and organizations in Canada.
- Use data gathered to create a pilot project including HEADS UP e-zine articles for seniors by seniors including questions to stimulate discussion among seniors individually or in group settings. Combining science with storytelling, the articles will focus on topics identified as important during the focus groups. Articles and questions will be shared with staff in local seniors' organizations and residences for testing to determine useability and effectiveness.
- Once articles and questions are refined to reflect input, they will be uploaded to the FOF website and promoted to seniors' and mental-health organizations in Vernon and beyond.

**SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS**

QUESTION	FG 1: WOMEN	FG 3: MEN	FG 2/4: INDEP. LIVING RESIDENTS	PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
<p><b>1. What keeps you mentally healthy and supports your overall well-being?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Family/grandchildren/friends/socializing/meeting new people/telephone</li> <li>2. Walks/exercise/golf</li> <li>3. Outdoors/nature/hiking/gardening</li> <li>4. Religion/spiritual practices/ meditation</li> <li>5. Learning/trying new things</li> <li>6. Staying busy/organizations/volunteering/community service</li> <li>7. Talking about mental health               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooking</li> <li>- Reading</li> <li>- Positive attitude</li> <li>- Coffee meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exercise/moving/skiing/paddling/ running/golf</li> <li>2. Wife/visiting family</li> <li>3. Conversations/staying connected with friends/maintain social calendar</li> <li>4. Fresh air/nature</li> <li>5. Life-long learning/trying new things</li> <li>6. Volunteering               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inventing/creating</li> <li>- Men’s Shed</li> </ul> </li> <li>7. Quite time alone/reflection               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talking to youth</li> <li>- Travelling</li> <li>- Reading</li> <li>- Seeing people you don’t usually see</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Board games/word games/bingo               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Singing/dancing/entertainment/music</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Coffee and mealtimes/socializing with other residents               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inspiration from staff</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Walking/walking pets</li> <li>4. Seeing family               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading</li> <li>- Handiwork (knitting, quilting, crocheting)</li> <li>- Exercise classes</li> <li>- Chapel/church</li> <li>- Bus outings</li> <li>- Watching TV/news</li> <li>- “Waking up every morning”</li> <li>- “Sunshine”</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategies for mental health and well-being are different for men and women, seniors of different ages, and seniors in various living situations.</li> <li>▪ Key overall strategies, in order of preference, include:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social connection with family, friends, pets, and other seniors</li> <li>2. Activities that keep seniors of all ages active and moving</li> <li>3. Nature</li> <li>4. Life-long learning and trying new things</li> <li>5. Hobbies</li> <li>6. Community service, volunteering, staying busy</li> <li>7. Talking about mental health</li> <li>8. Engaging with youth</li> <li>9. Faith-based activities/personal reflection</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

QUESTION	FG 1: WOMEN	FG 3: MEN	FG 2/4: INDEP. LIVING RESIDENTS	PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
<p><b>2. What are the key mental health issues and challenges for you and your senior loved ones and friends?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of access to health care</li> <li>2. Lack of access to support person or mental health advocate</li> <li>3. Isolation/loneliness/separation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family hard to access or talk to</li> <li>- Lack of sleep</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Cost of food/poor nutrition/gas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transportation/appointments</li> <li>- Technological challenges</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Waiting for help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desire to live independently</li> <li>- Moving (no friends, closer to family)</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Anxiety over news/fear for the environment/world issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family do not recognize need</li> <li>- Information changes</li> <li>- Lack of communication/feel like a bother</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of confidence/not knowing how to grow old gracefully</li> <li>2. Not visiting family/maintaining relationships with kids</li> <li>3. Lack of education about mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men are too competitive</li> <li>- Men need more opportunities to talk</li> <li>- Lack of transportation/restrictions/not driving</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Need to self advocate/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not on social media</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Give too much/need boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Societal expectations are high</li> <li>- Lack of self-motivation/work to fix self</li> <li>- Denial/acceptance of mental health challenges</li> <li>- Stress related to poverty</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Balance between physical and mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of sleep</li> <li>- Depression</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loss of memory</li> <li>2. Loss of mobility</li> <li>3. Struggling to communicate with friends and/or staff about mental health</li> <li>4. Loss of vision and other disabilities</li> <li>5. Negativity</li> <li>6. Living at a time when mental health was not talked about/shame in talking about it/ don't know how to talk about it</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Again, mental health issues and challenges varied among men and women, seniors of different ages, and seniors in various living situations.</li> <li>▪ Key overall issues and challenges were specific to women, men, and seniors in independent living.</li> <li>▪ Women identified the top three key challenges as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of access to health care</li> <li>2. Lack of access to support people or mental health advocates</li> <li>3. Tied for third are isolation, loneliness, separation; families being hard to access to talk to; and lack of sleep</li> </ol> </li> <li>▪ Men's top three challenges are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of knowledge about, and confidence around, growing old gracefully</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

				<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Not maintaining relationships with families</li><li>3. Lack of knowledge about, and motivation for self-advocacy</li></ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Seniors in independent living experience these primary challenges:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Age-related losses, including memory, mobility, vision, other disabilities</li><li>2. Lack of tools and discomfort in talking about mental health challenges</li><li>3. Negativity</li></ol></li></ul>
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QUESTION	FG 1: WOMEN	FG 3: MEN	FG 2/4: INDEP. LIVING RESIDENTS	PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
<p><b>3. What kinds of info would help you with the issued you talked about earlier?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personal stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Different topics/seniors' abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Easy access to information and help</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Communication with youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 24-hour helpline for seniors</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Newsletter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Radio/CBC</li> <li>- Facts and stats</li> <li>- Confidentiality</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Find support to go to doctor</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learning the arts of communication and conversation</li> <li>2. Personal stories</li> <li>3. Learning to deal with denial and fear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to friends/someone to call</li> <li>- Focus groups/workshops</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Mental health services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One-stop shopping for information</li> <li>- Statistics</li> <li>- Clear and concise educational materials long enough to share stories and info, but short enough to maintain interest</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. How to keep positive</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personal stories</li> <li>2. Sharing life experiences with other seniors</li> <li>3. Friends and family/social opportunities</li> <li>4. Groups like the HEADS UP for Seniors by Seniors focus group</li> <li>5. Online resources for seniors who aren't good with computers</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Storytelling was identified as the overwhelming favourite mechanism to educate and inspire seniors of all ages.</li> <li>▪ Sharing life experiences with other seniors and connecting with youth are also important (e.g., social settings, workshops, coffee meetings).</li> <li>▪ Seniors are keen to learn about key seniors' issues such as abuse, and challenges such as memory loss, denial/fear in user-friendly ways.</li> <li>▪ Seniors need to be educated about existing services such as mental health hotlines.</li> </ul>

QUESTION	FG 1: WOMEN	FG 3: MEN	FG 2/4: INDEP. LIVING RESIDENTS	PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
<b>4. How do you currently receive educational and/or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?</b>	1. Websites - Trouble with computers /websites 2. Newspaper 3. TV news/radio/Facebook 4. Pamphlets/print newsletters/magazines/Google 5. Discussion with family and friends 6. Health care professionals	1. Discussion with family friends 2. YouTube/TED Talks/magazines 3. Hospice House - Counselling - Not social media - Government events - Community events - Self-advocacy 4. Websites/podcasts/library	1. Doctor/Interior Health 2. Google/trusted websites (search for symptoms and treatment options) 3. Residents' newsletter and pamphlets 4. Talk to people with lived experience 5. Mental health nurse visits monthly 6. TV/newspapers 7. Community elders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feedback showed that participants currently gather information about mental health from medical professionals and services, the Internet, media, printed materials, government, and community events, and in discussion with family and friends.</li> </ul>
<b>5. How would you like to receive educational and/or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?</b>	1. TED Talks/short videos 2. Discussion groups/talk with friends/coffee groups/ 3. Low-tech 4. Newspaper/YouTube 5. Help with computers	1. Discussion groups 2. In-person events 3. Seniors' Summit 4. Zoom calls/podcasts/YouTube	1. Same as above 2. More group discussions aimed at mental health (e.g., e-zine article with book-club style questions to foster conversation... facilitated by residence staff or residents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Same as above, but with a much greater emphasis on in-person events.</li> </ul>

**FG 5: SENIOR WOMEN WITH MENTAL HEALTH EXPERIENCE IN THE COMMUNITY**

Feedback from this group was different in that we didn't ask the same questions posed in previous groups. Given the input we received from

the first five groups we chose to focus on communication challenges and engagement strategies for different seniors age groups.

- Topics were identified that seniors of various ages have difficulty discussing or finding information about:



- **Ages 45-55**
  - In addition to planning for their financial futures, these pre-seniors should be talking about retirement and how to prepare for its physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual implications.
  - This sandwich generation is taking care of their children and aging parents, which presents potentially serious mental health challenges for all involved.
  - Need information about, and options for, caregiving.
  - Need to understand MOST (formal document beyond DNR) and MAID (medical assistance in dying).
  
- **Ages 55-65**
  - Should be asking and answering these questions:
    - *What can I expect in retirement?*
    - *Have I prepared fully in all aspects of my life?*
    - *How will I find purpose and meaning in all stages of aging?*
    - *How will I stay connected with my family, friends, and community?*
    - *How can I give back to my community (e.g., coaching, mentoring, volunteering)?*
    - *How can I learn to talk about seniors' issues and challenges before I experience them?*
    - *How can I stay motivated to take care of myself?*
  
- *How can I work within my organization/company and industry to kick-start these conversations?*
- *What are MOST and MAID and how might they fit into my scenario?*
  
- **Ages 65-80**
  - Revisit questions above as health and circumstances change.
  - Ask more questions:
    - *Am I feeling invisible?*
    - *How can I feel worthwhile and relevant in our youth-focused culture?*
    - *How can I incorporate the topics of mental health and well-being into everyday conversations with family and friends?*
    - *How can I engage with youth to be energized while sharing my experience and wisdom?*
    - *Where can I find or mobilize face-to-face opportunities for seniors to share stories and learn about mental health*
    - *How can I find credible and user-friendly sources of mental health information and inspiration*
    - *How can I find a health/mental health advocate when I need one?*
    - *How can I prepare for the loss of loved ones and friends?*
    - *How will I know when it's time to move, and am I prepared?*

- **Ages 80+**
  - Should be asking and answering these questions:
    - *How can I best deal with the health/mental health implications of aging?*
    - *Will I know when it's time to talk with someone about my mental health?*
    - *How can I self-advocate for mental health and well-being?*
    - *When will I know it's time to move?*
    - *How can I stay connected with family and friends if I have health or transportation limitations?*
    - *How can I stay connected with, and inspired by, youth?*
    - *How can I build a strong support system?*
    - *Do my family and friends know my wishes around illness and death?*

promote mentoring, where they can share in their specific areas of expertise/wisdom.

- Seniors living in multiple-family settings seem to feel more connected.
- The role of churches has changed, meaning some seniors have lost what was a key opportunity for social connection.
- Age-friendly communities will support seniors' mental health and well-being. Vernon is in the early planning stages of this.

### **IN CLOSING...**

FOF is grateful to NHS for the opportunity to learn more about seniors' wants and needs for educational tools about their mental health, and to create materials that will inform, inspire, and mobilize them for positive change.

### **Other comments of note:**

- Discussions about mental health are most likely to unfold in environments where seniors are comfortable, and when being vulnerable doesn't feel unsafe.
- Many people find sharing easier when their hands are busy and they don't have to make eye contact (e.g., quilting groups, Men's Shed).
- Support groups are not for everyone, but can lead to lasting friendships.
- More community care nurses would help alleviate some seniors' mental health challenges.
- Perception of volunteering is changing with active seniors. Perhaps a better way to encourage community services is to

## APPENDIX 1: Detailed Focus Group Outcomes

### FOCUS GROUP #1: Senior Women

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\*September 26, 2022 / Schubert Seniors Centre / 8:30-11am

\*19 participants (ages 62-93), 1 facilitator (Jo de Vries/FOF), 5 scribes (Students Without Border Academy students), 1 coordinator (Phyllis Dyck/FOF)

#### Exercise #1: What keeps you mentally healthy and supports your overall well-being?

- Family/grandchildren/friends/socializing/meeting new people/telephone = 22 mentions
- Walks/exercise = 13
- Outdoors/nature/hiking/gardening = 10
- Religious/spiritual practices/meditation = 6
- Learning/trying something new = 5
- Staying busy = 4
- Organizations/volunteering/community service = 4
- Golf = 3
- Talking about mental health = 3
- Cooking = 3
- Reading = 3
- Positive attitude = 3
- Coffee meetings = 3
- Shopping = 2
- Motorcycling = 2
- Independence = 2
- Chocolate/eating = 2
- Cleaning = 2
- Counselling = 2
- Dancing = 2
- Knitting/quilting/weaving = 2
- Word games/scrabble = 2
- Pets = 1
- Working = 1
- Photography = 1
- Laughing = 1

#### Exercise # 2: What are the key mental health issues and challenges for you and your senior loved ones and friends?

- Access to health care = 12
- Lack of access to support person or mental health advocate = 9
- Sleep is harder = 7
- Isolation/loneliness/separation = 7
- Family not easy to talk to or access = 7
- Cost of food/poor nutrition/gas = 6
- Transportation/appointments = 6
- Technological challenges = 6
- Waiting for help = 5
- Desire to live independently = 5
- Moving - no friends - closer to family = 5
- Anxiety over news/fear for the environment/world issues = 4
- Family do not recognize need = 4
- Information changes = 4
- Communication/feel like a bother = 4
- False information on internet = 3
- Age related mental health = 3
- Feel they have no value = 2
- Too much change = 2
- Different generation = 2
- Family members doing care = 2
- Family conflict / decision making = 1
- Loss of ability to choose = 1
- No access to pool = 1
- Cancer treatment = 1
- Too much tv = 1
- Lack of engagement / waiting to die = 1
- Internal suffering = 1
- Pride = 1
- Abuse = 1
- Poverty = 1

### Meaningful Quotes:

- "Declining health can lead to so many more issues."
- "Everyone has the opportunity, but not everyone has the resources or support."
- "Wow, I am an elderly lady on the outside, but on the inside I am still a girl."
- "Change becomes harder."
- "So many are just waiting to die."
- "The older you get the more you need."
- "I don't want to be a bother."
- "Kindness has become a surprise."
- "Isolation is like a vicious circle."
- "Not all caregivers are the same, some are only in it for the money."
- "Adjusting and adapting to changing roles. "

### Exercise # 3: What kinds of information would help you with the issues and challenges you talked about earlier?

- Personal stories = 11
- Support groups = 11
- Different topics - seniors abuse = 5
- Easy access to information and help = 5
- Communication with youth = 4
- Good resources available = 4
- 24-hour helpline for seniors = 4
- Newsletter = 3
- Radio/CBC = 3
- Facts & stats = 3
- Confidentiality = 3
- What to say/what not to say = 2
- Find support to go to doctor = 2
- Visuals/short videos = 3
- Access to care in one spot = 2
- List of online resources = 1
- How to keep a good memory = 1
- How to ask for stories / information = 1
- Better advertising in the paper, on tv = 1
- Documentaries/podcasts = 1
- Doable small steps = 1
- Audio reports = 1
- Information/research on medication COVID/CBD, etc = 1

### Meaningful Quotes

- "Stress the fact that you are a medium to help people."
- "You don't know what you don't know."

### Exercise # 4: How do you currently receive educational or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?

- Websites = 7
- Trouble with computers/website = 7
- Newspaper = 6
- Tv news = 5
- Radio = 5
- Facebook = 5
- Pamphlets/print newsletters = 4
- Magazines = 4
- Google = 4
- Discussion with family and friends = 4
- Health care professionals = 3
- Library/books = 2
- Educational workshops, speakers = 2
- In person support = 2
- Youtube = 2
- Seniors' trips = 1
- Support groups = 1
- Podcasts = 1

### Meaningful Quotes

- "Family doesn't talk much, help find resources, or discuss options. They have their own problems."
- "Screens are draining physically"
- "Bias makes it hard."

### Exercise 5: How would you like to receive educational or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?

- TED Talks / short 10 min only = 8
- Discussion groups/talk with friends/coffee groups = 6
- Low tech = 4
- Newspaper = 3
- YouTube = 3
- Facebook / instagram = 2
- Help with computers = 2
- Audio books + 1
- Book club = 1
- Podcast = 1
- Brochures = 1
- Radio = 1
- Local media = 1
- Posters = 1
- Google = 1
- Not you tube or podcasts = 1

### FOCUS GROUP #2 OUTCOMES: Senior Residents at Coldstream Meadows

\*October 6, 2022 / Coldstream Meadows / 2:00-4:00pm)

\*15 participants (all over 65), 1 facilitator (Phyllis Dyck/FOF), 1 scribe (Jo de Vries/FOF)

### Exercise #1: What keeps you mentally healthy and supports your overall well-being?

- Board games/scrabble/word games/ bingo = 4
- Singing/dancing/entertainment/music = 4
- Coffee and mealtimes/socializing with other residents = 3
- Inspiration/encouragement from staff = 3
- My dog / walking 3 times a day = 2
- Seeing family
- Reading
- Handiwork (knitting, quilting, crocheting)
- Exercise classes
- Chapel (going to church)
- Swimming at the pool
- Bus outings (Swan Lake/Davisons Orchard/ bowling)
- Watching news
- Tv in the evening
- Recognizing seasons with decorations
- Waking up every morning
- Sunshine

### Exercise #2: What are the key mental health issues and challenges for you and your loved ones and friends?

- Remembering things
- Struggling to talk to friends and/or resident services staff
- Missing the lodge and the residents and staff there

### Meaningful Quotes

- "What can men do? How do we get men engaged?"
- "I want to keep up with the news but am afraid what tomorrow will bring"
- "What would help us is more meetings like this."
- "Past trauma... don't know what to look for, didn't know how to talk about it."
- "Used to be ashamed to talk about my mental health."
- "Seniors need to start talking... especially men."

### Exercise #3: What kind of information would help you with the issues and challenges you talked about earlier?

- Stories would be great
- Sharing life experiences
- Stats
- Humour
- Online resources... some good some bad

## FOCUS GROUP #3 OUTCOMES: Senior Men

\*October 14, 2022 / Schubert Seniors Centre in Vernon / 9-11:30am)

\*10 men (all over 65), 1 facilitator (Jo de Vries/FOF), 5 scribes (Students Without Borders Academy), 1 coordinator (Phyllis/FOF)

### Exercise # 1: What keeps you mentally healthy and supports your overall well-being?

- Exercise/moving/skiing/paddling/running/tennis/pickleball/coaching = 15
- Wife/visiting family = 9
- Conversations/stay connected/friends/friendships = 7
- Fresh air / nature = 6
- Learning/life-long learning/trying new things = 6
- Golf = 5
- Maintain social calendar = 5
- Volunteering = 4
- Inventing/creating = 4
- Men's shed = 4
- Quiet times alone/reflection = 3
- Talking to youth = 3
- Travelling = 3
- Seeing people you don't usually see = 3
- Reading = 3
- Being too busy to worry about yourself = 2
- Farming = 2
- Social organizations = 2
- Horses = 2
- Curiosity = 2
- Sleep = 1
- How to save the planet = 1
- Good dinner = 1
- Something to look forward to = 1
- Painting = 1
- Adventures = 1
- Planning retirement = 1
- Make to-do lists = 1

### Meaningful Quotes

- "Never stop being curious."
- "Sleep is so critical."
- "I cook more now."

- "Balance."
- "No grandkids makes it harder."

### **Exercise #2: What are the key mental health issues and challenges for you and your senior loved ones and friends?**

- Confidence / how to grow old gracefully = 7
- Access to visit family/ maintaining relationships with kids = 6
- Education = 5
- Men are in a competitive game = 5
- More opportunities to talk = 5
- Transportation restrictions/not driving = 5
- Need to self-advocate = 4
- Not on social media = 4
- Give too much - need boundaries = 3
- Societal health expectations are over the top = 3
- Lack of self-motivation / work to fix self = 3
- Denial / acceptance mental health issues = 3
- Stress related to poverty = 3
- Balance - physical and mental = 2
- Layout of health facilities, easy access = 2
- Family support fails = 2
- Sleep = 2
- Depression = 2
- Afraid to rely on others = 1
- Covid isolation = 1
- Medical issues - covid / cancer = 1
- Care in home = 1
- Expectations of doctors and health professionals for answers = 1
- Relying on others = 1
- Not driving = 1
- Feeling invisible = 1
- Covid / vaccines dividing families and friends = 1
- Worry kids can fend for themselves and be successful = 1

### **Meaningful Quotes**

- "There is no education program for health and getting old."
- "We know the info is there but need an outside force to keep us moving."
- "I am afraid of losing my independence."
- "How do you bring value to yourself?"
- "Is someone going to care?"
- " No phone, no iPad, no computer; you've got problems."
- "I am starting to feel invisible as I am getting older"
- "Frustrated not being able to keep up to others."

### **Exercise #3: What kinds of information would help you with the issues and challenges you talked about earlier?**

- Communication / learning the art of conversation = 16
- Stories = 6
- Learning to deal with denial / fear = 4
- Access and friends/someone to call = 4
- Focus groups/workshops = 4
- Mental health services = 3
- One stop shopping for information = 3
- Statistics = 3
- Info short enough to be of interest, long enough to obtain info = 3
- Keep positive = 2
- Information about activities = 2
- Clear and easy = 1
- Local media = 1
- Speakers = 1
- Ted talks on phone = 1
- Information available that you don't need to search online = 1
- Information about isolation = 1
- Finding ways to stay off social media and online platforms = 1

### Meaningful Quotes

- "Fear stops people from looking for help."
- "In some ways we are all mentally ill, there is no normal."
- "Wellness is not one thing."
- "Men aren't good communicators, they don't show feelings."

### Exercise # 4: How do you currently receive educational or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?

- Discussion with family and friends = 6
- Youtube = 3
- Ted talks = 3
- Magazines = 3
- Hospice house = 2
- Counselling = 2
- Not social media = 2
- Government websites = 2
- Community events = 2
- Self-advocate = 2
- Books = 2
- Websites = 1
- Podcasts = 1
- Library = 1
- Support groups = 1

### Meaningful Quotes

- "Seniors in poverty need access to information and help."
- "Accessibility for seniors who can't read."
- "Trying to figure out technology is a huge waste of time and makes me frustrated."
- "Why can't we just talk."
- "Deeper emotion is not for text or emails."

### Exercise #5: How would you like to receive educational or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?

- Discussion groups = 5
- In person events = 4
- Senior's summit = 3
- Youtube = 1
- Tv = 1
- Not social media = 1
- news = 1
- door-to-door marketing = 1
- mailing brochures = 1
- podcasts = 1
- Zoom calls = 1

### Meaningful Quotes

- "There are risks to online sharing."
- "You talk, you sit down with each other."
- "Write articles with the support of the person this is happening to."

## FOCUS GROUP #4 OUTCOMES: Senior Residents at Abbeyfield Vernon

\*October 20, 2022 / Abbeyfield House Vernon / 3:00-4:30pm)

\*7 senior men and women (all over 65), 1 facilitator/scribe (Phyllis Dyck/FOF)



**Exercise #1: What keeps you mentally healthy and supports your overall well-being?**

- Keeping busy
- Support person
- Going for walks
- Knitting
- Reading
- Eating healthy
- Keeping positive

**Exercise #2: What are the key mental health issues and challenges for you and your senior loved ones and friends?**

- Mobility
- Memory
- Vision
- Negativity

**Exercise #3: What kinds of information would help you with the issues and challenges you talked about earlier?**

- Audio books
- Communication - opportunities to talk with group like this
- Friends / social opportunities
- Talking with family

**Exercise #4: How do you currently receive educational or inspirational information about seniors' mental health and well-being?**

- Doctor
- Google
- Newsletter
- TV
- Elders

**Meaningful Quotes**

- "I learned everything from my elders"
- "Friends and family are my lifeline, they keep me healthy."
- "All can feel fear, but we don't have to let it get the best of us."
- "Don't let fear stop you."
- "You can only be mentally well if you are treated well with kindness."
- "I won't accept negativity"