

Activity and Social Interactions

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The authors of this material were a team of students from Laurentian University. Starting in the winter of 2021, each of them had a role. All of them found activities to help people stay active and stay connected. Together they found images, wrote sections of the text, edited, reviewed, and created the layout of this manual.

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Acknowledgments

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We would also especially like to thank David Munch, CEO at Finlandia Village. Through his vision researchers will learn from residents and residents will benefit from research. We hope this manual is a first step in this direction.

Preface

It is a well established phenomenon that isolation, lack of social contact, and a reduction in activities has a detrimental effect on a person's wellbeing and mental health. During the time of COVID-19 we felt that the risks of social isolation for seniors would be compounded. We looked for ways to help-to make it easier to connect with others and to find things to do.

Although many seniors are uncomfortable with computers, we are confident that the resources already available over the internet could help them. The internet offers many opportunities for activities and ways to connect with others. In fact, research has shown that one of the best interventions for older adults is to show them how to use electronic devices such as a tablet or a computer. We have written a guide addressing this challenge entitled "Welcome to the Online World."

Once we are comfortable with using the internet, the next challenge is to find the resources which match our interests. That is where this guide comes in. This guide is intended to help people find activities and improve quality of life.

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About this book

Dear Seniors, there are great benefits to being active. Active people feel better, live longer, are healthier and are happier. This doesn't just mean exercising. It also means finding activities, hobbies and ways to stay in touch with friends.

We think that this guide can help. The internet has something for everyone and that includes inspiration for how to stay active. This activity guide will give you some ideas on how to get the most out of this new online world!

What will you find inside? It includes some exciting options for keeping your social life active. For example, we talk about different types of online gatherings and activities, such as virtual museums and online dance classes. We have some suggestions on how to travel or explore some places without leaving your home, where to find free books to read, some ideas for crafts, places to learn, and some suggestions to interesting sites.

All of our choices have been included because research has shown that they can help keep people happy and healthy.

If you are not comfortable with the technology, we have a companion guide to help you learn to use your tablet or computer entitled “Welcome to the Online World”. We suggest that you have someone that knows those technologies beside you while you are learning about them. If you encounter difficulties, they will be there to help.

You will see that we have divided the book into themes. Each theme shows just a few ideas the authors felt you might be interested in. Think of the book as a guided tour of possibilities. For each section within a theme is a little bit of writing and some links. These links are places that you can click if you are reading this on a device connected to the internet. This will take you directly to the webpage we thought to recommend. Please click on this [link](#). If it brought you to a publication done by Senior Planet, you did it right!

Since this is not, primarily, a physical book, it is easy to update. We would be very happy if you were to send suggestions for new material, comments on what to remove, and instructions on how to make it more useful.

Bruce and Josée

We would love to receive your feedback, your suggestions. Please write an email to lira_well_being@laurentian.ca or call Josée Turcotte at 705 675-1151 ext. 4238. She speaks French too.



« No matter how many mistakes you make or how slow your progress, you are still way ahead of everyone who isn't trying. »

Tony Robbins
