

# SENIOR'S MENTAL HEALTH: Myths & Opportunities

Growing older presents a unique set of mental health challenges. If you're a senior, you might be asking: Will I lose my memory? Will I become depressed and/or anxious and have to take medication? How will the loss of loved ones affect me? And what if I become isolated or chronically ill?

## Rethink your expectations

While recognizing that each person's aging experience is unique, experts agree that cognitive and emotional decline are not inevitable, especially if you sleep enough, eat well, exercise regularly, and maintain loving relationships. Whether you're a younger or older senior, the resilience built from these healthy habits can enrich and extend your life.

You might be surprised to learn that of all those lifestyle choices, sustaining social connection is likely the most significant. For instance, emerging research shows that COVID-driven isolation and loneliness among seniors are at epidemic proportions, and are causing rapid increases in depression, anxiety, substance use, and suicidal ideation.

## Connect with your "peeps"

The best prescription? Human connection with family, friends, and other people who share similar interests (e.g., gardening, walking, cooking). Volunteering and interacting with youth are also great ways to cultivate and conserve good mental health.



## Boost your mental health literacy

To learn more about your mental health, check out the Fresh Outlook Foundation's HEADS UP! Community Mental Health program at [freshoutlookfoundation.org](https://freshoutlookfoundation.org).

FOF's acclaimed HEADS UP virtual summits and podcasts explore a variety of mental health issues with people from all sectors, ages, ethnicities, cultures, abilities, and genders.

In a format proven to inform, inspire, and mobilize audiences, HEADS UP combines science with storytelling, with each episode addressing a specific issue and its impacts on individuals, families, workplaces, and communities.

## Have a listen

Check out FOF's recent podcast on seniors' mental health, featuring a geriatric psychiatrist, seniors' health consultant, and caregiver/seniors' health care advocate.

FOF founder, Jo de Vries (a senior herself) says "these women's passions and insights are profound and will change lives."

[freshoutlookfoundation.org/podcasts](https://freshoutlookfoundation.org/podcasts)

## Help us keep our HEADS UP for community mental health!

*The **Fresh Outlook Foundation**, a registered charity in the North Okanagan, hosts events and programs to inspire community conversations for sustainable change. With help from granting organizations, sponsors, and donors, FOF produces the highly acclaimed HEADS UP! Community Mental Health Podcasts & Virtual Summits.*



**Please support FOF's valuable work. Visit [freshoutlookfoundation.org/donations](https://freshoutlookfoundation.org/donations).**