

SOS Insights

from my desk to your heart

As much as we all miss large family gatherings or travelling, we are reminded by Dr. Bonnie Henry that the situation we find ourselves in this Thanksgiving is not forever, it's just for now. I recognize that this is usually a time many of you would be planning a get-together, and how difficult that can be if you are on your own. We will get through this and we can look forward to reuniting for a good meal with friends and family down the road.



Research has shown that social isolation and loneliness can contribute to a variety of physical and mental conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease and a weakened immune system, among others. However, people who engage in meaningful, productive activities tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a sense of purpose.

At SOS we have restarted a number of child, youth and family programs in a reduced capacity, because we know how important these connections are. Friendly visiting with seniors continues through our Oceanside Better at Home program. Our Counselling Referral program is operating in a safe manner. We know participants in our Seniors Connecting program are missing each other, and we miss them too! We look forward to when we can safely restart that program. In the meantime, here are a few suggestions for productive activities this holiday weekend.

Celebrate even if you're on your own. Prepare a lovely meal for yourself or pick-up something that feels celebratory. Call someone, or **write some letters and cards** giving thanks to people who you love and miss. Ultimately, helping yourself or others to better cope with the negative impact of social isolation is about moving beyond yourself and into the service of others.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported SOS, now and in the past. You have all made such a difference in our communities, you've changed lives and helped bring about so many smiles and warm memories that will live on in people's hearts. Your kindness and compassion certainly gives me so much to be thankful for. Happy Thanksgiving!

Susanna

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