**Let’s Talk Frankly About Loneliness and Why Sociability Matters**

Loneliness, in its sullen deceptive silence, visits us all at some point. It can barge in for a somber evening, or linger on for years, like a guest who’s long overstayed their welcome.

While it’s reassuring to know we’re not alone in feeling lonely, the emotions themselves often stop us from making efforts to connect with others.

That’s where this article comes in. While we don’t have any grand illusions of solving loneliness, we’d like to offer a few (well, 5) suggestions to help you or a fellow resident in a lonely funk, move closer to sociability.

Sociability, as we know, isn’t just about filling time or avoiding silence, it’s about connecting to other humans with our heads and hearts. Hopefully also with our funny bones. What may seem like insignificant daily interactions — a brief chat in the dining room, a shared article or book, mutually appreciating a new bloom in the courtyard, laughing at the same line in a film — can help us chip away at the edges of loneliness, making us feel a bit more seen, heard, and understood. Or, to put it simply, like we matter to another person.

Speaking of feeling seen, I can relate to the introverts reading this. I often find socializing a tad daunting or worse, anxiety inducing. To combat this, I now tell myself social fear is just excitement wearing a sneaky disguise ☺

I’ve also come to learn that socializing is a practice, like exercise. It’s something we cultivate a little bit every day, until eventually it becomes our new un-lonely way of life.

**5 Tips for Embracing Connection — And Encouraging it in Others!**

**Start Small, Like Really Small** Some days, all it takes is a friendly hello or smile. Even if the conversation doesn’t go anywhere, it plants a seed. It may not sprout immediately, but it’s there. Be bold and say “Howdy” to someone you don’t know very well.

**Try One New Activity a Month**

Peruse the Heritage monthly calendar and try *one new activity a month* (or one a week if you’re feeling courageous). Have a passion for something? Needlepoint, artificial intelligence, model making, yoga? Speak to Name TBD and start a weekly meet-up.

**Reach Out, Even if It’s Awkward**

If you sense someone at Heritage is feeling lonely, a simple invite to coffee or a stroll in the garden might lift their spirits somewhat. We can’t expect socializing will solve all our human problems but it can certainly help.

**Be a Listening Ear**

Sometimes listening can be more powerful than talking. It creates a quiet bond that encourages deeper connection.

**Forgive Yourself, You’re Human!**

Missing a deep connection you once had? Hoping for new meaningful connections but you’re not sure how to find them? You’re not alone. Others at Heritage are most-certainly feeling the same way.

Now that you've graciously considered our tips, let’s hear what your fellow Heritage residents have to say on the matter.