

Post-pandemic Growth: Finding Strength Through Meaningful Engagement and Connections

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Enhancing Life

“Post-pandemic”

- When will this be?
- What will it look like?
- How to get through until then?



Elder care during COVID-19

- Professional/Personal
- Self/Other



Elder care during COVID-19

- Community-based care
- Primary care
- Congregate care settings (e.g., retirement home, long-term care)

Ageism and COVID-19: what does our society's response say about us?

Sarah Fraser ¹, Martine Lagacé ², Bienvenu Bongué ³, Ndatté Ndeye ³, Jessica Guyot ³, Lauren Bechard ⁴, Linda Garcia ⁵, Vanessa Taler ⁶, CCNA Social Inclusion and Stigma Working Group; Stéphane Adam ⁷, Marie Beaulieu ⁸, Caroline D Bergeron ⁹, Valérian Boudjemadi ¹⁰, Donatienne Desmette ¹¹, Anna Rosa Donizzetti ¹², Sophie Éthier ¹³, Suzanne Garon ¹⁴, Margaret Gillis ¹⁵, Mélanie Levasseur ¹⁶, Monique Lortie-Lussier ⁶, Patrik Marier ¹⁷, Annie Robitaille ¹, Kim Sawchuk ¹⁸, Constance Lafontaine ¹⁸, Francine Tougas ⁶



STAY HOME
STAY SAFE
SAVE LIVES

‘Difficult and depressing’: the hard reality of shielding alone as an older person

Elder care during COVID-19

- Community-based care
- Avoiding transfer of care
- Palliative care within the home
 - Bereavement support
 - “Survivor’s guilt”
- Additional needs within the home
 - Care needs (e.g., virtual schooling)
 - Financial constraints

Elder care during COVID-19

- Primary care
- Staffing crisis
 - Attrition and absences (shielding/ill/care provision)
- End of life experience

Elder care during COVID-19

- Congregate care settings (e.g., retirement home, long-term care)

Elder care during COVID-19

- IPAC-related restrictions both into and within homes
- Is it possible to engage residents and counteract the harmful effects of social isolation?
- How can we address multiple domains of resident health and well-being?
 - Secondary changes to care partners



News / Canada

TU THANH HA >
PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 13, 2020

TRENDING

COVID-19 horrors in Ontario LTCs leave nurses with severe trauma and post-traumatic stress: Report

Many Ontario nurses reported worsening mental health due to workload and lack of protective equipment in the nursing facilities affected by COVID-19

Margarita Maltceva

Mar 31, 2021 • April 13, 2021 • 8 minute read • [45 Comments](#)

OTTAWA CITIZEN

Local News

Working in long-term care by day, sleeping in a shelter by night: The economic realities of life as a PSW

Elizabeth Payne

Jan 08, 2021 • January 8, 2021 • 4 minute read • [18 Comments](#)

How the long-term care crisis has left workers with deep emotional scars

JILL MAHONEY >

PUBLISHED MAY 30, 2021

TRENDING

2017

SATURDAY	
7	9:00 Would you Rather—Oak 10:00 Crosswords—Appleby 11:00 Salvation Army—TH 2:00 Entertainment With Ken Lighthouse On Main Street 3:15 Finishing Lines- Bronte 3:15 News and Views—Oak 4:15 Card Bingo—Appleby 6:30 Bingo On Main Street
14	9:00 Cards—Oaklands 10:00 Word Games—Appleby 11:00 Ball Toss—Nelson 2:00 Entertainment With Flo On Main Street 3:15 Card Bingo—Oaklands 3:30 Finishing Lines—Bronte 4:15 Word Games—Appleby 6:30 Bingo On main Street
21	9:00 Matching Game —Oaklands 10:00 Word Games—Appleby 11:00 Short Stories—Nelson 2:00 Entertainment With Tristan Alexander On Main Street 3:15 Bowling—Oaklands 3:30 Finishing Lyrics—Bronte 4:15 Card Bingo—Appleby 6:30 Bingo On main Street
28	9:00 Card Bingo —Oaklands 10:00 Word Games—Appleby 11:00 Sing a Long — Nelson 2:00 Entertainment With Prince Cave On Main Street 3:15 Shake Loose a Memory— Oaklands 3:30 Active Games —Bronte 4:15 Card Bingo—Appleby 6:30 Bingo On main Street

2021

SATURDAY	
2	2:00 Virtual entertainment– Bronte
9	9:30 Daily chronicles 10:00 Music on demand 11:00 Friendly visits 2:00 Virtual entertainment – Bronte 2:15 Window clean up 4:00 Show time!
16	2:00 Virtual entertainment– Bronte
23	9:30 Daily chronicles 10:00 Sing a longs 11:00 Friendly visit 2:00 Virtual entertainment – Bronte 3:00 Exercise with Jane 4:00 Show time!
30	2:00 Virtual church service-Bronte

Impetus for this research

- Trauma → Moral Distress and Injury
 - Developed in a military context
 - Perpetrate, bear witness to, or fail to prevent an act that transgresses their deeply held moral beliefs
(Dean, Talbot, & Dean, 2019, *Federal Practitioner*)
 - Healthcare setting: moral beliefs about meeting the needs of patient/resident
 - Systemic barriers to care provision

Moral distress and injury

- COVID-19
- Systemic barriers to care provision
- Support for care professionals

Changes to Recreation in LTC survey

- October 2020- Feb 28, 2021
- 19 Questions
 - 8- demographics
 - 11- related to changing role during COVID and current experiences
- Anonymous, access through SurveyMonkey
 - Distributed through CLRI, RIA, SCER, and TRO, social media channels

Demographics

- 299 respondents
 - 97% female
 - *M* age = 38 years (*range* = 19-68 years)
- Median time in role: 3 years (*range* = 1 mo-30 yrs)
- Operators
 - 113 across Canada
 - AB, BC, MB, NB, ON, SK, NWT, YT
 - 68% of responses from Ontario

Self-reported health

- Physical:
 - 65% rated Excellent or Very Good
 - **5% Fair or Poor**
- Mental (Emotional):
 - 35% rated Excellent or Very Good
 - **29% Fair or Poor**

Changes in job satisfaction

- **56% decrease**

- “The unknown of if and when the virus could effect [sic] anyone we work with.” (P363)
- “Residents falling through the cracks... Not enough time in the day.”(P378)
- “I love what I do, but the restrictions and barriers are overwhelming.”(P208)

- **11% increase**

- “Having meaningful interactions with the residents and seeing them smile in a stressful time.” (P241)

Major changes to role

- Programming
- Visits
- Technology use
- Staffing
- Safety

Concerns about role

- Not enough time, resources, or space
- Not being able to help residents
 - “Residents are lonely in their rooms and there is only one of me and 32 of them.”(P388)
 - “Resident moral [sic] has been down due to loneliness and not being able to see family in person.” (P363)

Concerns about role

- Government restrictions:
 - “When it comes to sharing materials, having food in group settings, gathering in groups, allowing people from outside agency to come into the building... it is recreation that suffers the most.” (P397)
- Lack of support from other HCWs/leadership
 - Value placed on role
 - “Recreation is needed to keep residents happy but management does not see that... We feel very worthless” (P4)
 - “Recreation was the first to go. Programs discontinued.” (P36)

Moral Distress and Injury

- “Feeling guilty that I can’t meet the needs of all my residents.” (P53)
- “Seeing residents, families and staff so sad and depressed all the time. Dealing with the constant ask when can I see my family, hug them hold them etc. It doesn’t [sic] feel like a home. It feels like an institution and we are living in the 1930 with bars on the windows.” (P158)
- “...it is also super stressful to see the residents become depressed from lack of human contact and knowing this is an essential time for therapeutic interventions, but being told TR isn’t as essential as other departments and being pulled and unable to engage in TR interventions” (P342)

Effects of role on personal life (and vice versa)

- Fatigue and Mood
 - “Being tired at the end of the day limits what I want to do with my family.” (P342)
 - “Being so burnt out from work makes it hard to want to be present at home.” (P125)
- Work-life balance (especially for parents)
- Housing and Financial concerns
 - “Financial demands are impacting my work life quite a bit... I get paid as if I work at McDonald’s. It’s humiliating and degrading to get paid so little for such important work.” (P223)

Insights into self

- Dichotomy between pride in own strength and resilience and restrictions to role/lack of appreciation of role



Insights into self

- Pride and appreciation of self and abilities
 - Flexible
 - Resilient
 - Creative
 - Strong
 - Optimistic
 - Making a difference
 - Strengthening connections

Insights into self

- Connections to residents and to fellow staff
 - Belief in role

Insights into self

“This entire year has been one big exercise in creativity. Our role has gone from exactly what we pictured and practiced for in school to something completely different but even more important.”
(P386)

Flexibility and creativity!

- “I’ve become a church service leader, a music leader, a family member, a volunteer, a messenger and more. We are on our own with no religious groups, volunteers, entertainers , children’s groups etc. We have always wore [sic] many hats but during COVID the hat rack has grown! ”(P272)

Insights into self

“... I am more than a Recreation Leader. I am my residents advocate, I am a part of their family , I am their connection to the world, I am their voice, their reason for joy and laughter, their constant when their families can't visit. I am their calm, their friend. ... My role is essential now more than ever.” (P37)

“It's evident our role is more crucial and valuable then ever before. Providing engagement and connection during these times.” (P43)

Innovative care strategies

HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS FOR CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS IN LTC SETTINGS WHILE STAYING SAFE

1

SPREADING JOY

Festive travelling carts, Holiday cards, Caroling and Cheer, Secret Santa, Decorations and costumes

2

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Family video calls, Virtual programs (Zoo, Earth Cam, Concerts, Christmas Light Tours)

3

THEMED EVENTS

Santa visits, Special snow-themed activities, Christmas bazaar, Reminiscence activities, Bringing snow indoors, Festival of lights, Winter Wonderland, Winter movies, Hanukkah-themed activities

4

SPECIAL MEALS

Sundae bar, Christmas tea, Winter picnic, Coffee shop "drive-thru", Charcuterie boards, Hot chocolate and marshmallow socials

5

IPAC CONSIDERATIONS

Considerable adaptation to programming, Smaller group celebrations, Room-to-room and/or hallway holiday parties, Window visits, Festive dressing up combined with PPE

Insights into self

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Summary

- Challenges within roles
 - Physical safety and Mental health concerns
 - Constraints/demands on time
 - Ability to attend to/meet needs of elders
 - Recognition/Valued
- Personal growth and professional development
 - Flexibility, creativity and personalization to meet residents needs
 - Emerging practices- sharing to learn more

Finding Strength Through Meaningful Engagement and Connections

- Recreation and Leisure
 - “Serious” leisure
 - The power of play
 - Meaning and purpose
- Social connections
 - New
 - Renewed

Reactions to stressors

- Fight/Flight/Freeze
- Physical reactions
- Psychological reactions

Stress and the brain

- Cortisol- main stress hormone
- Memory and learning



Stress and the brain

- Mental time travel
- Exploring a world of possibilities



Protections from stressors

- Rest and recovery
- Seeking control where you can (organization)
- Acknowledging limits

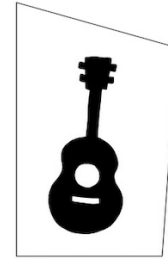
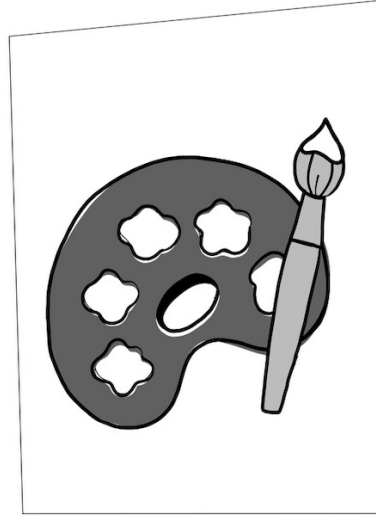
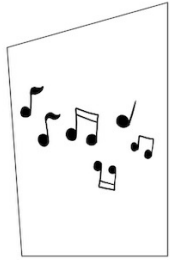
Protecting the brain

- Physical activity
- Cognitive stimulation
- Social support
- Sleep
- Intake (food, substances)

Counteracting stressors

- Mindfulness
- Breathing awareness

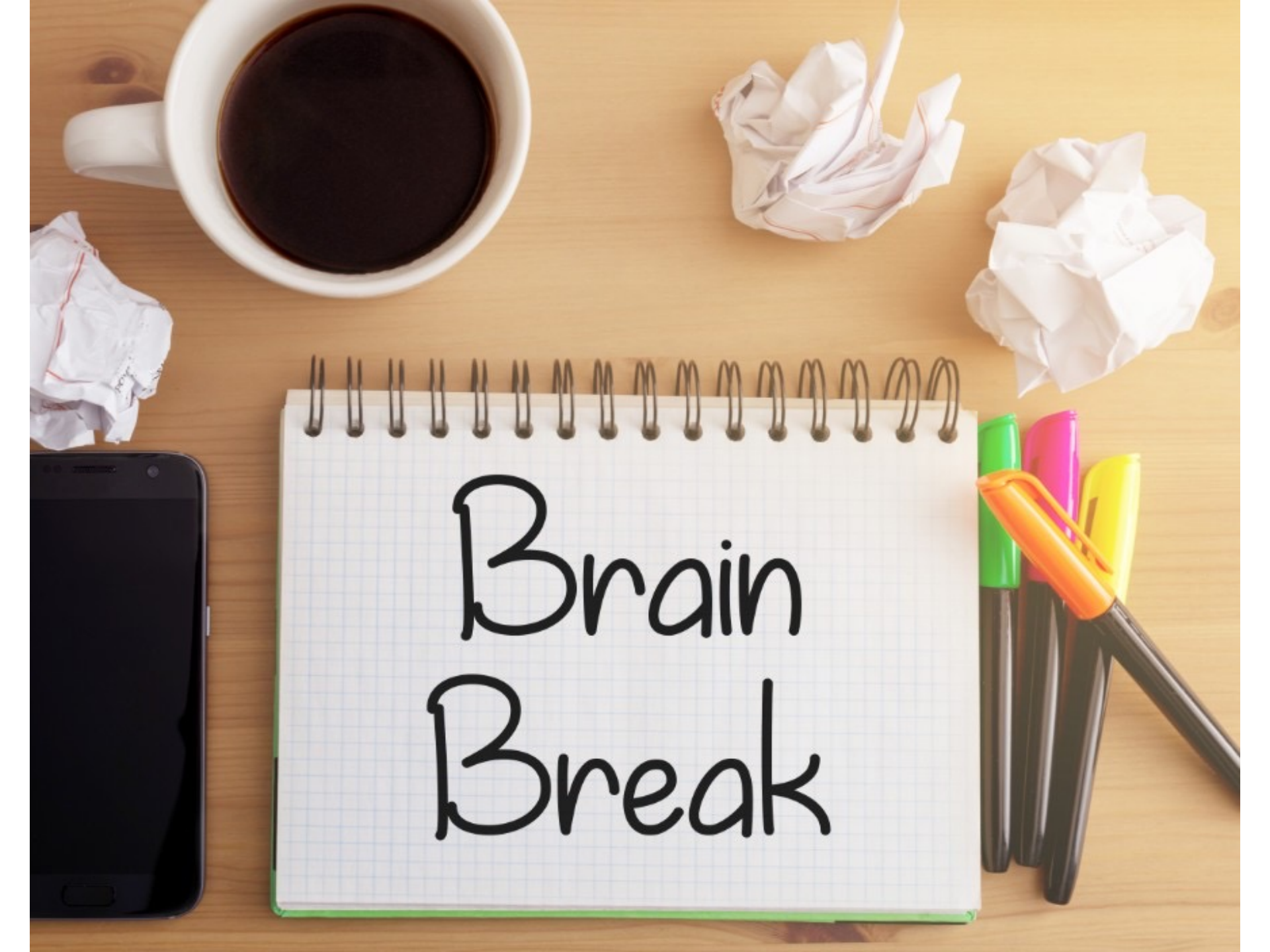
- Creativity and self-expression
 - Calming images/words/phrases



Arts and Health

Counteracting stressors

- The arts can help...
 - Bodies
 - Brains and thinking skills
 - Mood
 - Social connections
- For us and those we care for

A top-down view of a desk with a light wood grain. In the top left is a white coffee cup filled with dark coffee. To its right are two crumpled pieces of white paper. In the bottom left is a black smartphone. In the center is a spiral-bound notebook with a green cover and a grid pattern. The words "Brain Break" are written in a large, black, rounded font on the notebook. To the right of the notebook are four markers with black barrels and colored caps: green, pink, yellow, and orange.

Brain
Break

Sharing

- Making sense of the world through self-expression

Possibilities

- Post-traumatic growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun)
 - New understandings of
 - Self
 - World you inhabit
 - Relating to others
 - Future (potential)

Possibilities

- Post-traumatic growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun)
 - Measure...
 - Appreciations for living life
 - Relationships with others
 - New possibilities in life
 - Personal strength
 - Spiritual change

Moving forward

- Aspirational goals (“realistic positivity”)
- Exploration



FACULTY OF ARTS PRESENTS

Coming home to yourself

A line drawing of a hand holding a pen, positioned as if writing the end of the title "to yourself".

Writing poems for wholeness
and self-discovery
with Richard Osler



The grief, the sadness, even, sometimes the joy we carry are often kept under lock and key inside our everyday lives. But so often, writing a poem is the key to releasing them. And when our deeper truths surface in our poetry, we can find healing and positive transformation.

All levels of experience are welcome.

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. | Online
Feb. 16, 2022 | This event is free.

Register mru.ca/cominghome

QUESTIONS?

Thank
you 