



# HEALTHY AGING

## Socialization leads to a better quality of life for seniors

By Angela Clark, RN

How important is socialization as we age? Have you ever thought about this question or what does it really mean?

No one wants to spend most of their days at home alone with a television or having limited interactions with others. Isolation and loneliness is becoming an increasing problem in our busy, fast paced world.

### BE SELF AWARE

Pay attention to your daily schedule or that of the loved one you care for. Focus on the type of activities that actually fills the day, and with whom? Many studies are showing that isolation and a lack of socialization can lead to memory issues as well as depression for seniors.

### SENIOR RESOURCES

The next step is to look at possible socialization resources in your community. I highly recommend looking into local Senior Centers; they offer the opportunity to mix with contemporaries while also making available a wide variety of dynamic activities. Joining a gym that offers group classes can also connect you with others to increase your circle of friends. Finally many local organizations need help and seniors can make a huge difference. Think about volunteering – organizations such as cities and hospitals often offer a wide variety of volunteer programs.

### SENIOR LIVING OPTIONS

Senior living communities offer the opportunity to start living again and build a new network of connections. The definition

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of a community is a social unit of any size that shares common values. Senior living communities offer apartment style of living with restaurant dining and activities. It a supportive environment that can provide a renewed life on a daily basis – I can't overstate enough the importance and power in social interaction to promote healthy living. Just think about being able to have a meal with other people, attend daily activities and programs, and always knowing there is someone there if you need help with anything at anytime. In a recent study at the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) researchers found that seniors in the U.S who have an active social life may have a slower rate of memory loss.

### A FEW HOURS A WEEK IS NOT ENOUGH

Socialization is not a housekeeper or caregiver stopping by the home for a few hours each week. Although many seniors generally have contact with their families throughout a week it is typically limited hours which just does not provide enough contact to truly fulfill our needs as human beings. We each require more interaction with others on a daily basis, this is why socialization is required for overall good health and well-being.

Angela Neale Clark MBA, RN is the CEO and Founder of Living Your Choice, a free Placement Company that guides seniors and their families to build a customized plan for senior living options. Angela has had over twenty years experience in the industry and has helped thousands of families. She can be reached at 800-419-9098, ext 801 or visit [www.LivingYourChoice.com](http://www.LivingYourChoice.com)

