

## *Bridging the Gap*

Do you notice there is a gap between you and the younger generation as you age? Have you felt your role in the community has lost its value? Do you feel lonely? Do you find it harder to get things accomplished and get through the day?

As we age, we face many losses: independence, mobility, health, career/work, and loved ones. Grieving our losses is normal, but with grieving there are still moments of happiness and of counting our blessings. Depression on the other hand is the feeling of constant emptiness and despair. It is a myth that depression is a part of aging.

Over-coming loneliness and depression involves:

- finding new things you enjoy and are able to do
- learning to adapt to change
- staying physically and socially active
- feeling connected to your church, community, and loved ones.
- focusing on what you can still do and not what you used to do
- practice positive thinking
- staying in touch with loved ones- face to face is best or at least hear their voice. Texting not recommended.

Ideas for accomplishing this, depending on whether you can drive or not:

- Have a senior companion come to your home
- Exercise equipment like a stationary bike or join a wellness center
- Sitting outside and getting fresh air and sunshine whenever possible
- Bird feeder and plants to care for and enjoy
- Puzzles or puzzle books or Bible puzzle in the Banner of Truth

- Reading simple religious stories such as Bible History by J.Vreugdenhil or Expository Lectures on Old and New Testament Histories by N. Greendyk
- Reading a daily devotional
- Make scrapbooks with old pictures and memorabilia. Label people in the pictures and write down memories of your life history for the next generations.
- Go for a daily walk, whether it be outside or the halls of a bigger facility such as a school, nursing home, or mall
- Volunteer, as helping others is one of the best ways to feel better about yourself
- Visiting other homebound elderly and reading to them if they have vision problems
- Seek friendship in a group such as Foster Grandparents or Senior Companion program
- Learn a new skill- paint by number, craft kits or take a class
- Recycle, downsize belongings and storage rooms
- Get a pet or help take care of someone's pet. Doesn't need to be big. Fish and birds are enjoyable to watch
- Most of all, have a routine of eating 3 balanced meals a day, bathing daily, helping each other if spouse still living, keeping up with the daily news.

Each of us has to learn how to adapt as we age. Focus on things we are grateful for, accept things we can not change, express our feelings, monitor our diet ( high sugar boosts energy initially, but later we will suffer a blood sugar drop and feel worse), simple exercises (15min every day), sunshine when possible, as this is proven to improve mood and energy levels

Finally seek the Lord in all things in life and death. He never forsakes a true seeker and is always there for you to come to in prayer.