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Aging in Community: Seniors' Options for Creating Mutual Support and Cohousing [How can we build neighbourliness?]

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Senior Cohousing Model

Adapting the European approach to senior cohousing for Canada, these innovative seniors-led housing communities support optimal aging. Senior cohousing combines private home ownership with shared amenities (small private space with large common space), lower energy use, neighbourly cooperation, and an emphasis on flourishing through mutual support. Variations include subsidized units, intergenerational housing, intergenerational outreach. Most cohousing communities are located within a broader neighbourhood with easy access to services and opportunities.

Village to Village Model

A non-housing approach to creating and sustaining a mutual support network within a specific geographical area. The fast-growing Village to Village Network already supports 200+ Villages across North America. The most frequent services offered by these mostly-volunteer, seniors-led villages are: information and referral, transportation and shopping, household and computer maintenance.

Websites

Village to Village Network

www.vtvnetwork.org

Senior Cohousing

www.seniorcohousing.com

Canadian Senior Cohousing

www.canadianseniorcohousing.com

Second Journey

www.secondjourney.org

References

*Blanchard, J. M. (Ed.) (2013). *Aging in Community*. Chapel Hill NC: Second Journey.
See also <http://www.secondjourney.org/itin/ISSUES/AIC.htm>

Chapin, R. (2013). *Pocket Neighborhoods: Creating Small-Scale Community in a Large-Scale World*. Newtown CT: Taunton Press.

Durrett, C. (2009). ***The Senior Cohousing Handbook: Community Approach to Independent Living***, 2nd ed. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society.

McCamant, K., & Durrett, C. (2011). ***Creating Co-housing: Building Sustainable Communities***. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.

ScottHanson, K., & ScottHanson, C. (2004). ***The Cohousing Handbook: Building A Place for Community***. Gabriola Island BC: New Society Publishers.

Selected Quotations

Perhaps ironically, while the oldest old may live alone and emphasize independence, many are only able to be autonomous because they ask for help. They, like all of us, balance dependence with independence.

~ Meika Loe

Connecting with another person is a deeply fulfilling experience.

When a group of people purposefully stretch themselves, by connecting to each other beyond the borders of selectivity and commonality, a profoundly hospitable community is created.

- a community in which belonging, contribution and accomplishment occur regularly and naturally.

Now that's something to look forward to during one's second journey through life!

~ E Headley

Sitting around a table is not just a way of passing time.

It is the way the wisdom gets passed along.

~ Rachel Naomi Remen

Community is where humility and glory touch.

~ Henri J.M. Nouwen.

We hunger for communities for meaning that can transcend the individualism and selfishness that we see around us.

~ Michael Lerner

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

~ Helen Keller

It is possible that the next Buddha will not take the form of an individual.

The next Buddha may take the form of a community, a community practicing understanding and loving kindness, a community practicing mindful living.

This may be the most important thing we can do for the survival of the earth.

~ Thich Nhat Hahn

The fundamental quality of human beings is to be in relationship.

~ Jean Vanier