

Things Seniors Can Do to Meet Other Seniors



Who knew that smartphones and social media would turn out to be effective tools to enable seniors to meet seniors? With new online senior groups popping up on Facebook and Pinterest almost daily, it makes connecting with other seniors online easier than ever.

Not only is it fun but reaching out to your peers is good for you. According to a 2016 study published in the *Journal of Gerontology*, seniors (even those in their 80s) who stay connected with family and friends using social media report feeling better and less lonely. The study also determined that those seniors who stay connected also demonstrate higher executive reasoning skills.

But online connections are only one way to stay connected. Don't neglect the value of spending time with people in real time. Granted, older individuals who no longer work or who live away from extended family may find it difficult to meet other seniors in real life, here are seven ways to help you meet seniors in your area:

Volunteer

There are many opportunities for seniors to volunteer, whether you are fit and active or not. Individuals who are handy and active can consider volunteering with Habitat for Humanity or contributing time and effort to keep nature trails in local parks and wooded areas clear with a local park and recreational organization. Seniors who are less mobile can still meet seniors by volunteering at the local library's information desk or assisting families at food pantries. If you are looking for other creative ways to give back and contribute your time locally, check with your community.

Continuing Education Classes

Many community colleges offer courses specifically for seniors and these academic adventures can be a great way for seniors to meet other seniors. There are non-credit, community courses in painting, ceramics, culinary arts, gardening or other active areas of study. In addition, many colleges offer classes that are free (or significantly discounted) for senior students.

Take a Senior Fitness Class

Additional opportunities to meet seniors in your area can be found in senior fitness classes. Private gyms and local YMCAs offer activities specifically for seniors, such as aqua aerobics and senior Zumba classes. Individuals who are less mobile can still be active if they find a gym offering chair yoga or other courses appropriate for limited mobility.

Take a Senior Trip

A more adventurous way to meet others is to sign up to take a trip—either with a local travel company that offers day trips or with organizations that specialize in trips for those 55 and older.

If you're fit and active, and you enjoy rowing and hiking, there are organizations specializing in more active outings and more rugged adventures for travelers 55 and older.

Just because you've attained the status of senior, there is no reason you should not be out and about and having fun with your peers. Get the most out of it by enjoying your time with others your age.

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