



FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

TOGETHER



FAMILY

OLDER ADULTS

We Can Get Stronger! Transcendence and Spirituality

Exploring and sharing our beliefs and cultural heritage can foster spiritual connectedness. This builds resilience by offering us meaning, purpose, and connection beyond ourselves. Spiritual connectedness can be found in many different ways. For example, in nature, with animals, through art or through religion. This can also promote health, healing, and acceptance of difficult situations.

These activities are some ways that older adults can connect to their beliefs and heritage.

Practice mindfulness or meditation. For older adults, mindfulness and meditation can reduce depression and pain, preserve cognitive functioning, and decrease loneliness. Mindfulness encourages you to be aware of your thoughts and feelings in the moment. You can use mindfulness and meditation to shift focus, reflect, and find acceptance. Through mindful practice, set an intention. Or, find a deep connection within yourself and concentrate on it. How can you feel more fulfilled? How can you increase joy and peace within your life? You can also try a [10-minute gratitude meditation](#) to reflect on all the gifts in your life. Read more about [building a spiritual life during COVID-19](#).

Gardening. Connectedness to nature is one way to promote psychological and spiritual resiliency. Watching and helping things grow can give us a sense of control. Some of the mental health benefits include mood improvement, reduced stress and anxiety and improved self-esteem. Gardening is also a great form of physical activity for older adults and can be especially helpful for those with dementia. Not sure where to start? Read some of the articles below about how to garden. Gardening doesn't have to be complicated. [You can even pick out a few, new low-maintenance houseplants.](#)

- [Start an indoor vegetable garden: growing vegetables indoors made easy](#)
- [How to create an indoor garden that's easy to take care of](#)
- [How to grow a quarantine garden when you're tight on space](#)

Plant a tree in remembrance of a loved one. Planting a tree can honor a loved one and provide comfort to those who experienced loss. It can bring together families, connect future generations, and provide environmental benefits beyond our lifetime. You can plant a tree yourself or go through an organization, such as the [Arbor Day Foundation](#).

Research and tell stories from your family history. Family history can connect generations and shed light on family values and practices. You may wish to visit your local library's website to use genealogy resources or search registries, manuscripts, and vital records for information on your genealogy. Consider telling stories about your childhood or passing down tales about your ancestors. Sharing these types of stories provides a personal history for younger family members that will help them understand their place in the world. Consider archiving your family story at the Library of Congress by recording conversations with family members remotely through [Story Corps Connect](#).

References

- Godman, H. (2018, June 22). *The many benefits of meditation for older adults*. U.S. News & World Report. <https://health.usnews.com/wellness/aging-well/articles/2018-06-22/the-many-benefits-of-meditation-for-older-adults>
- Sunrise Senior Living. (2019, April 1). *7 ways older adults benefit from gardening*. <https://www.sunriseseniorliving.com/blog/april-2019/7-ways-older-adults-benefit-from-gardening.aspx>