

FRIENDS NEAR & FAR

Communities of Support?



Having a **supportive community** can provide comfort, encouragement, and affirmation in life. This support extends beyond immediate family members and encompasses our chosen family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and even online communities that share common interests and experiences.

Why do we need each other?

Reducing Social Isolation and Stigma: Often, we do not seek mental health support because we fear others will judge us. When our communities are a safe space for open discussions on mental health, we help break down these barriers. We are not alone in our struggles. We can seek help and have open discussions with others to help understand our own experiences.

Creating a Sense of Belonging: Being part of a community fosters a sense of belonging that contributes to a strong sense of self-worth. When we feel valued and accepted, we can develop a positive self-image and practice self-care.

Shared Experiences and Empathy: The power of community support is in the acceptance people give to each other. When people connect over similar struggles, we provide support that goes beyond sympathy to true understanding. This shared empathy can help us feel validated and less alone in our challenges, promoting a sense of unity and friendship.

Emotional Regulation and Resilience: Community support provides a safety net during times of emotional turbulence. Being able to express feelings and receive support from others can help with coping. Through shared experiences, communities empower individuals to navigate life's ups and downs more effectively.

(Information from Power Mind Matters)



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Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources

For Immediate Access to Mental Health Support

Toronto Distress Centre - 416-408-4357 www.torontodistresscentre.com *Providing telephone support, crisis intervention, suicide prevention and supporting those dealing with loss and trauma. Services provided in over 151 languages thanks to an interpreter service.*

For Referral/Recommendations for Counselling

Therapy Mental Health Helpline – 1-866-531-2600 www.MentalHealthHelpline.ca

For Connection with a Primary Health Care Provider

Health Care Connect - <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ms/healthcareconnect/pro/>
Unattached patients can call or go online to ontario.ca/healthcareconnect to register with the program.

Community Mental Health and Counseling Services/Resources (free)

- **Family Service Toronto** – 416-595-9230 <https://familyservicetoronto.org/>
- **The Access Point** - <http://theaccesspoint.ca/> - *For referral to free mental health services*
- **Call 211** and ask for specific services in your area or visit www.211toronto.ca
- **Skylark (formerly Oolagen) (Downtown)** 416-395-0660 www.oolagen.org -- *For youth 13-18, and their families (and ages 0-18yrs on Mon and Fri) 65 Wellesley Street East, Suite 500*

Drop-In Counseling Services

- **LAMP Community Health Centre (West End)** 416-252-6471 ext. 235 185 Fifth Street, Etobicoke *For people living in the area of: The Queensway - the Lake, and Mississauga border - the Humber River.*
- **Woodgreen Community Services (East End)** 416-645-6000 ext. 2512, 1367 www.woodgreen.org 815 Danforth Ave, 2nd Floor, Suite 202

Distress/Crisis Lines and Contact Information:

- **The Gerstein Crisis Centre** –416-929-5200, 416-929-9897 www.gersteincentre.org
- **Toronto Rape Crisis Centre – Multicultural Woman Against Rape** – 416-597-8808
- **Assaulted Women’s Helpline** – 416-863-0511