

## University of Dundee

### Older Persons' Rights

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# OLDER PERSONS' RIGHTS

## LESSONS FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

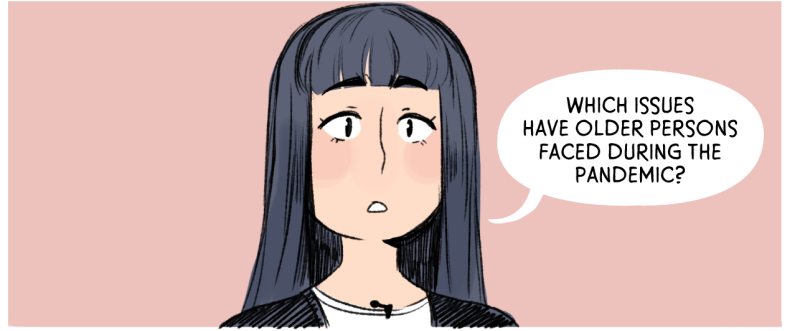
WRITTEN BY MAYRA CROWE, FERNANDO BERRIEL AND CHRIS MURRAY - ART BY CATRIONA LAIRD



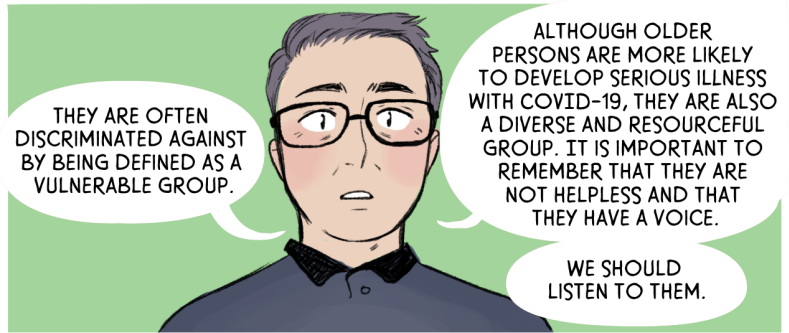
OLDER PEOPLE HAVE THE SAME HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AS OTHERS.

THEY ARE CITIZENS WITH RIGHTS AND ABLE TO MAKE AUTONOMOUS DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR LIVES.

FERNANDO BERRIEL,  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF  
PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSIDAD DE LA  
REPÚBLICA, URUGUAY



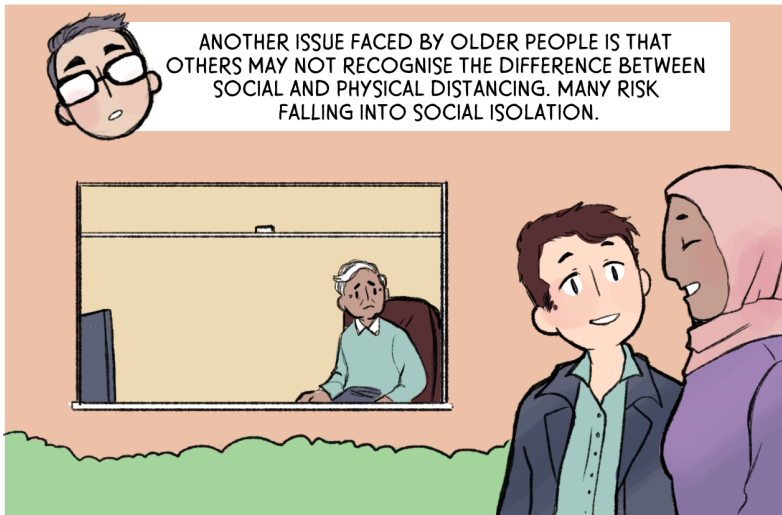
WHICH ISSUES HAVE OLDER PERSONS FACED DURING THE PANDEMIC?



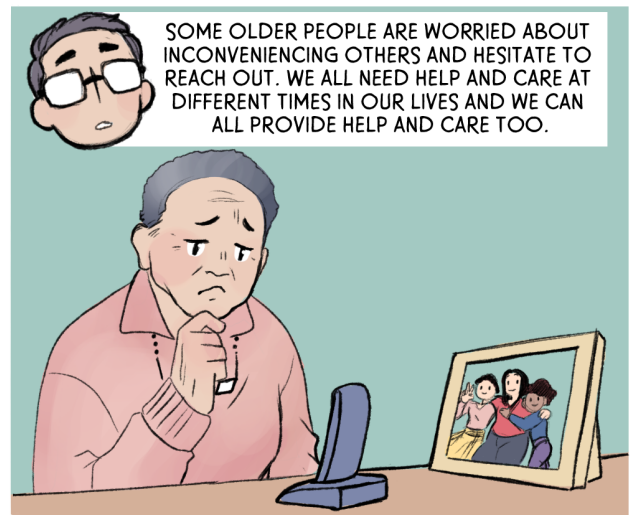
THEY ARE OFTEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY BEING DEFINED AS A VULNERABLE GROUP.

ALTHOUGH OLDER PERSONS ARE MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP SERIOUS ILLNESS WITH COVID-19, THEY ARE ALSO A DIVERSE AND RESOURCEFUL GROUP. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THEY ARE NOT HELPLESS AND THAT THEY HAVE A VOICE.

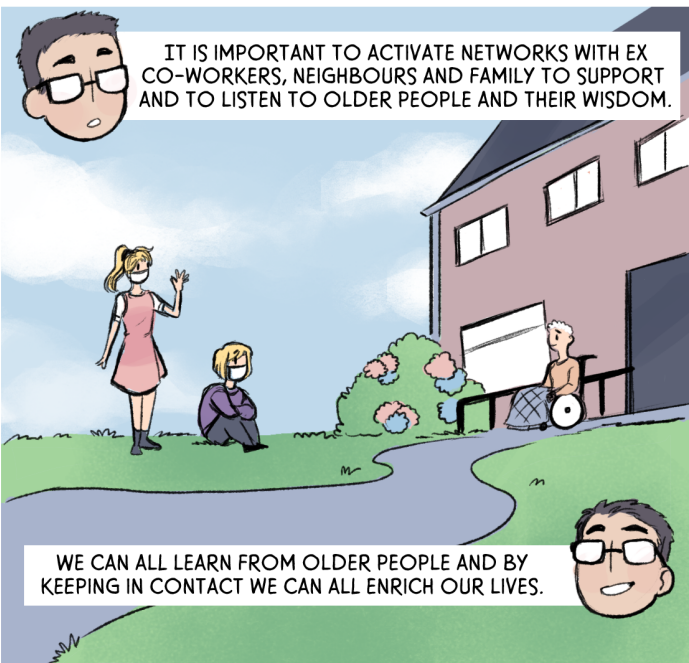
WE SHOULD LISTEN TO THEM.



ANOTHER ISSUE FACED BY OLDER PEOPLE IS THAT OTHERS MAY NOT RECOGNISE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING. MANY RISK FALLING INTO SOCIAL ISOLATION.

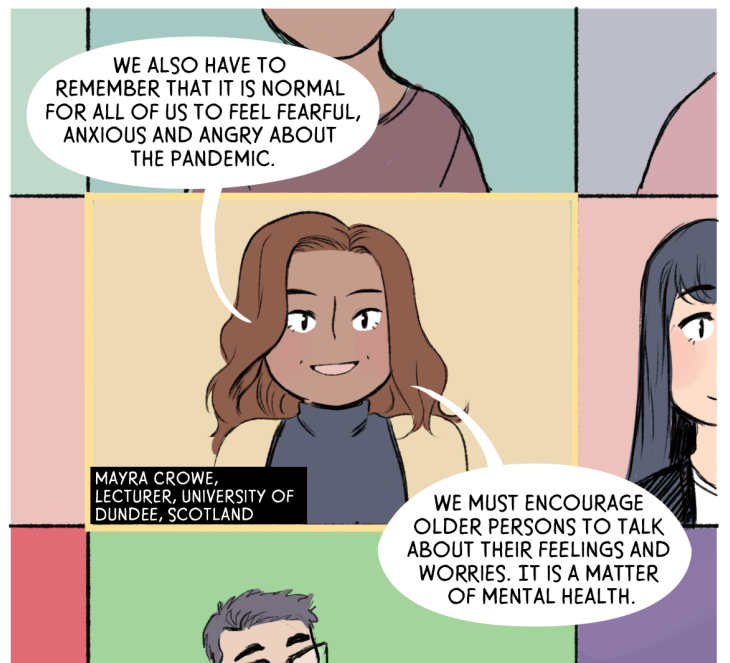


SOME OLDER PEOPLE ARE WORRIED ABOUT INCONVENIENCING OTHERS AND HESITATE TO REACH OUT. WE ALL NEED HELP AND CARE AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN OUR LIVES AND WE CAN ALL PROVIDE HELP AND CARE TOO.



IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACTIVATE NETWORKS WITH EX CO-WORKERS, NEIGHBOURS AND FAMILY TO SUPPORT AND TO LISTEN TO OLDER PEOPLE AND THEIR WISDOM.

WE CAN ALL LEARN FROM OLDER PEOPLE AND BY KEEPING IN CONTACT WE CAN ALL ENRICH OUR LIVES.



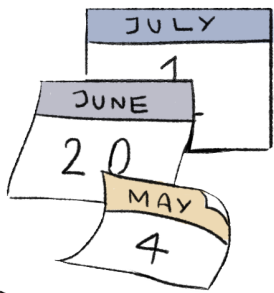
WE ALSO HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT IT IS NORMAL FOR ALL OF US TO FEEL FEARFUL, ANXIOUS AND ANGRY ABOUT THE PANDEMIC.

MAYRA CROWE,  
LECTURER, UNIVERSITY OF  
DUNDEE, SCOTLAND

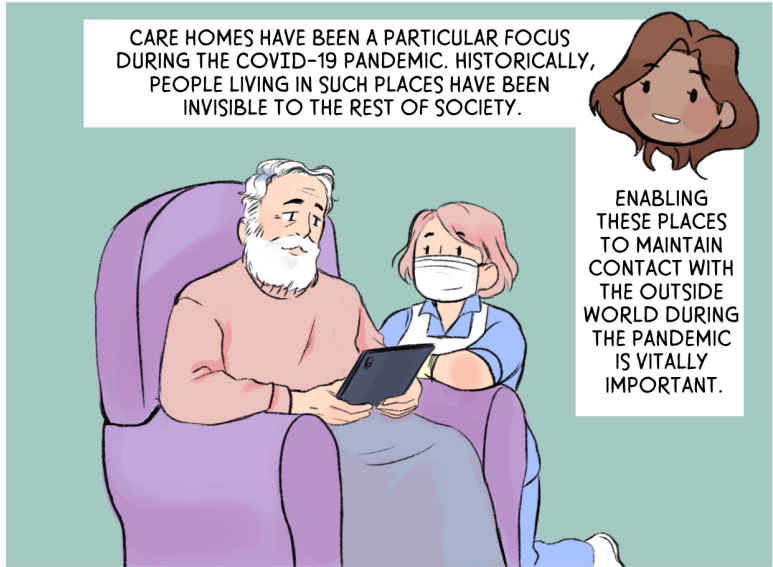
WE MUST ENCOURAGE OLDER PERSONS TO TALK ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS AND WORRIES. IT IS A MATTER OF MENTAL HEALTH.



LOCKDOWN AND DISTANCING HEALTH MEASURES CAN BRING FEELINGS OF ISOLATION AND LONELINESS.



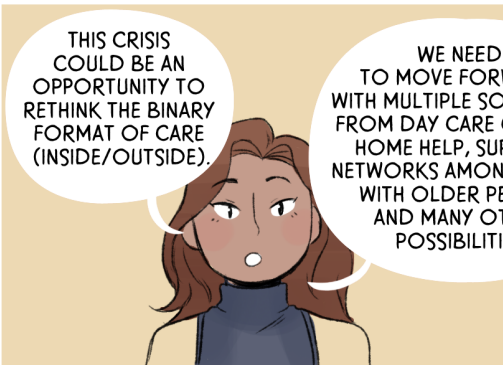
THE NEED TO MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCE FOR HEALTH REASONS SHOULD NEVER BE CONFUSED WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING AND ISOLATION.



CARE HOMES HAVE BEEN A PARTICULAR FOCUS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. HISTORICALLY, PEOPLE LIVING IN SUCH PLACES HAVE BEEN INVISIBLE TO THE REST OF SOCIETY.



ENABLING THESE PLACES TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD DURING THE PANDEMIC IS VITALLY IMPORTANT.



THIS CRISIS COULD BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETHINK THE BINARY FORMAT OF CARE (INSIDE/OUTSIDE).

WE NEED TO MOVE FORWARD WITH MULTIPLE SOLUTIONS, FROM DAY CARE CENTRES, HOME HELP, SUPPORT NETWORKS AMONGST AND WITH OLDER PEOPLE, AND MANY OTHER POSSIBILITIES.

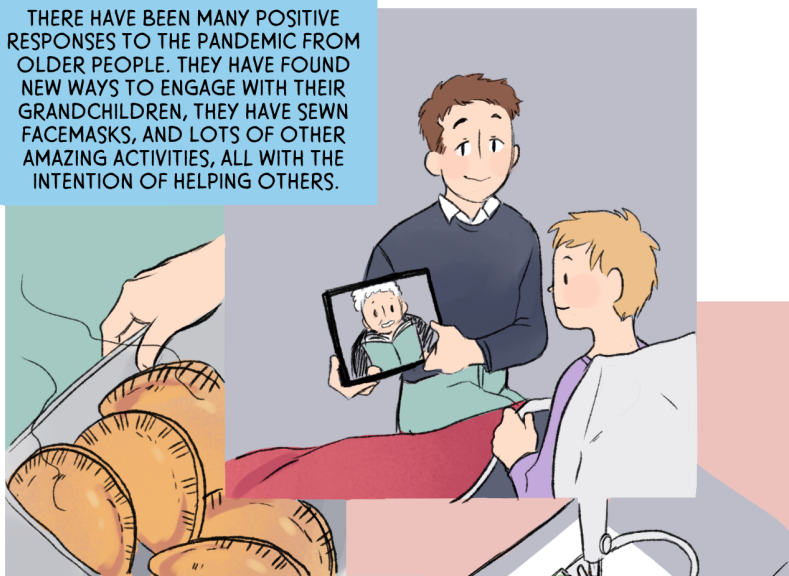


SO, HOW CAN WE BE OF HELP?



IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE EFFECTIVE NETWORKS SO OLDER PEOPLE ARE INTEGRATED WITHIN COMMUNITIES AND SOCIETIES. IT IS A MATTER OF GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT AND ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE.

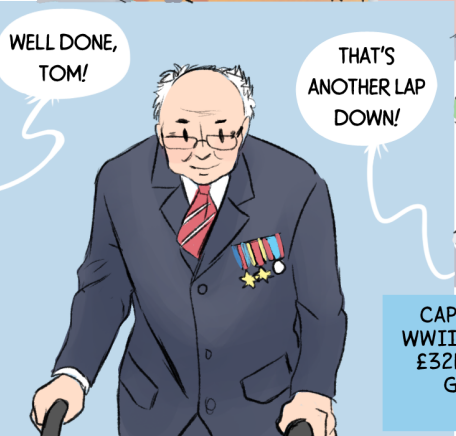
THERE HAVE BEEN MANY POSITIVE RESPONSES TO THE PANDEMIC FROM OLDER PEOPLE. THEY HAVE FOUND NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR GRANDCHILDREN, THEY HAVE SEWN FACEMASKS, AND LOTS OF OTHER AMAZING ACTIVITIES, ALL WITH THE INTENTION OF HELPING OTHERS.



IN URUGUAY, 80 YEAR OLD ÁGUEDA RESTAINO, A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK FOR OLDER PEOPLE, A COLLECTION OF 300 DIFFERENT PRO-OLDER PERSON'S ORGANIZATIONS, LED A CAMPAIGN TO STOP A BILL WHICH WOULD HAVE HAD A MAJOR NEGATIVE IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS FOR OLDER PERSONS.



ÁGUEDA FOUGHT AND WON, TO KEEP THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION ON PROTECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS, WHICH RECOGNISES OLDER PERSONS AS PEOPLE WITH THE SAME HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AS OTHERS.



WELL DONE, TOM!

THAT'S ANOTHER LAP DOWN!

CAPT. TOM MOORE, A 100 YEAR OLD WWII VETERAN, MANAGED TO RAISE OVER £32M BY COMPLETING 100 LAPS IN HIS GARDEN. THE MONEY RAISED WAS DONATED TO NHS CHARITIES.

ONLY AS A COLLECTIVE WE CAN CREATE A BETTER SOCIETY AND LEARN FROM THE HARD LESSONS OF THE PANDEMIC.



THIS WILL HELP ENABLE OUR OLDER PERSONS TO BE FULLY INTEGRATED INTO SOCIETY AS A HETEROGENIC GROUP AND BE RECOGNISED AS PEOPLE WITH THE SAME HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AS OTHERS, DURING THE PANDEMIC AND BEYOND.