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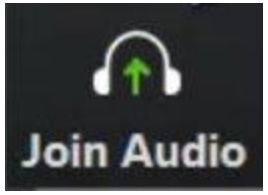
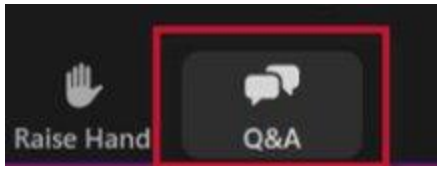
Capturing Data to Measure the Impact of CDSME on Social Connection

February 11, 2026

Housekeeping

- **Audio Options**
  - Use your computer speakers, OR dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
  - All participants are muted.
- **Questions and Answers (Q&A)**
  - On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the Q&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.
  - For any questions that we aren't able to respond to, you may follow-up at info@committoconnect.org.
- **Chat Feature**
  - The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, co-hosts and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.





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Accessibility and Support

- **ASL services are being provided today and will be pinned**
- **CART services are also being provided.**
  - Click on the CC Show Captions button or click on the link in the chat
- **Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter**
  - Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, “S”
- **To get our attention if you need tech assistance:**
  - Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y

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Presenters

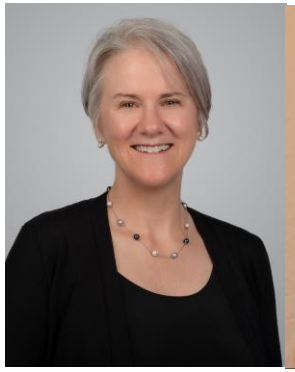
Matthew Lee Smith, Professor, Indiana University School of Public Health

Taisha Selby, MPH, Community Health Worker Team Lead, Illinois Pathways to Health AgeOptions

Ann Morgan, Executive Director, The North Country Healthy Heart Network

Morgan Greenwood, MPH, MCH, Program Manager/Senior Public Health Specialist, The North Country Healthy Heart Network

Laura Morris, MHL, MS, CPHQ, Director of Data Analytics & Information Technology, Adirondack Health Institute



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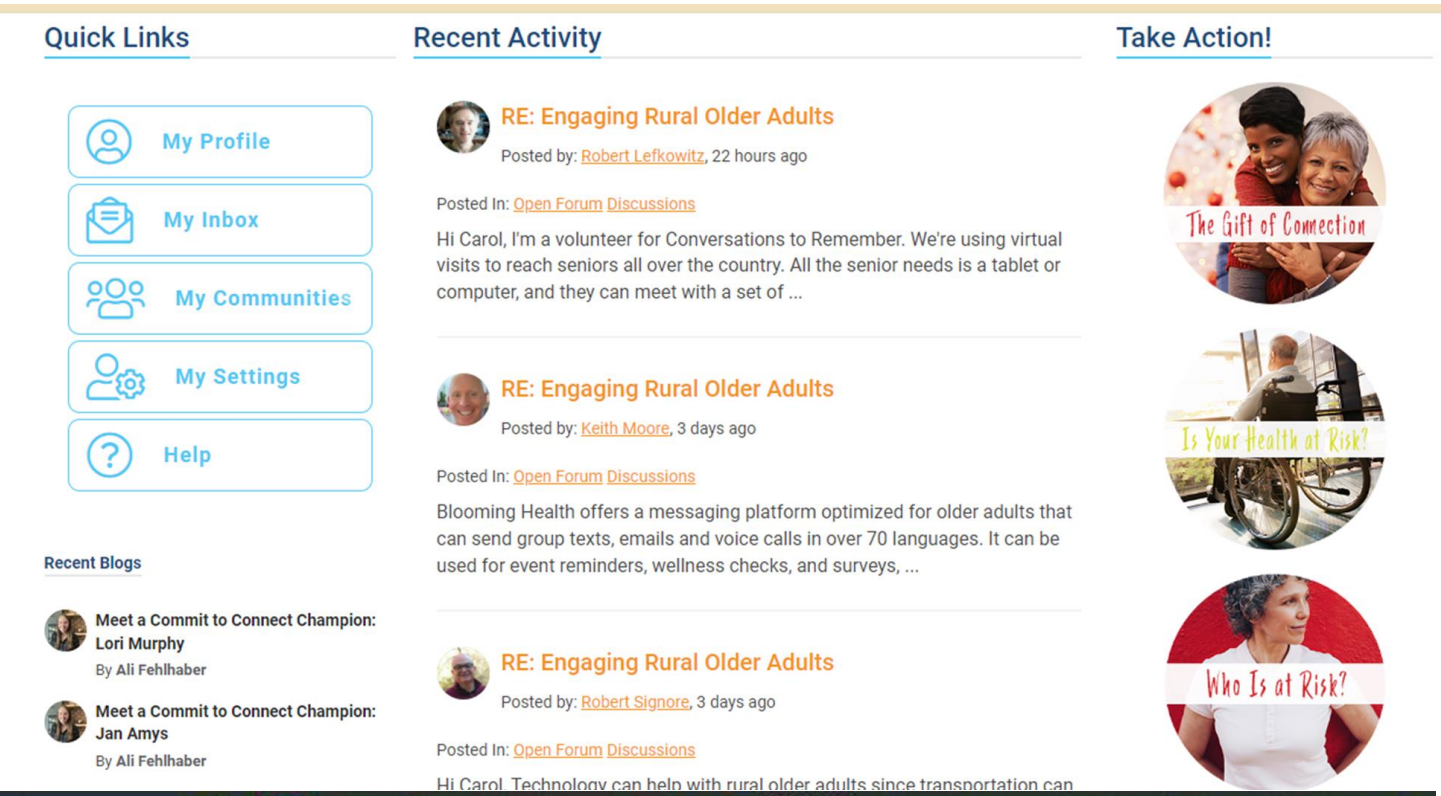
COMBATTING SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN ALL COMMUNITIES

Commit to Connect

www.committoconnect.org

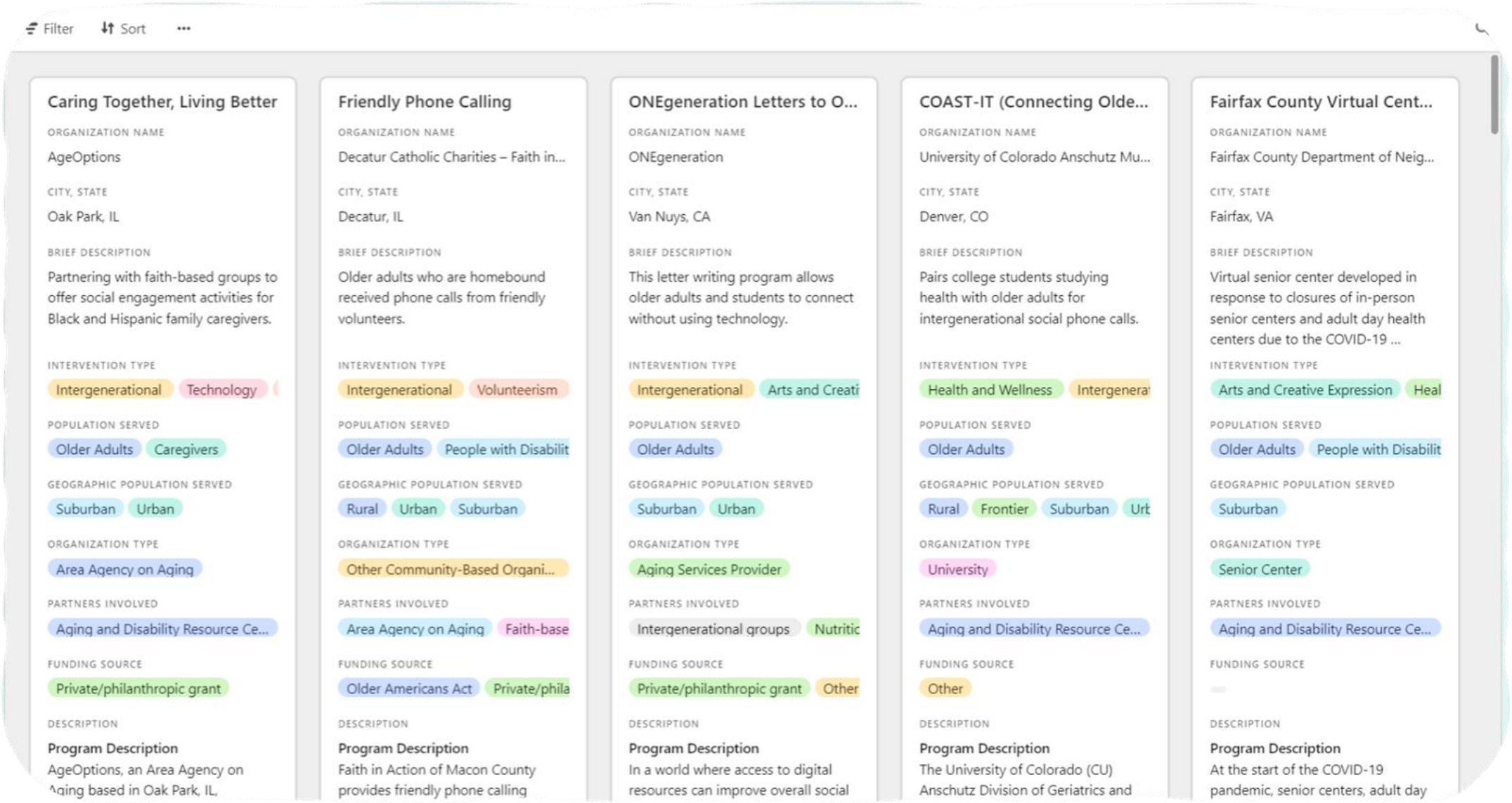
- **Technical Assistance**
  - Annual National Summit to Increase Social Connections
  - Professional and consumer resources
  - Webinars and Office Hours
- **Communities of Practices on outcome evaluation**
  - Impact of Chronic Disease Self-Management Education programs on social connection
- **“Innovations Hub” to encourage replication**
  - Clearinghouse of 100+ model programs, interventions, and solutions
- **Engage an online Nationwide Network of Champions**
  - 650+ leaders at local, state, and national levels



CTC Nationwide Network of Champions

Innovations Hub

committoconnect.org/innovations-hub



Community of Practice: Assessing the Retrospective Impact of Chronic Disease Self-Management Education Programs on Social Connection

June 2025 – October 2025

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Community of Practice: Opportunity

- Commit to Connect's 2025 Community of Practice included six community care hubs (CCHs) serving older adults and people with disabilities and offering chronic disease self-management education (CDSME) programs.
- The Community of Practice worked with members to measure the impact of their CDSME programs on social connection through retrospective data collection.

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Community of Practice: Members

Community Care Hub	State	CDSME Programs Evaluated
Get Healthy North Country Community Integrated Health Network*	NY	Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)
Healthy Living for ME	ME	CDSMP
Illinois Pathways to Health - Age Options*	IL	CDSMP
Lumber River Council of Governments	NC	CDSMP
Mid-America Community Support Network	MO	CDSMP, Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP), Chronic Pain Self-Management Program (CPSMP)
Partners in Care Foundation	CA	CDSMP, DSMP

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Community of Practice: Goals

Participating organizations:

- Collected data from clients who completed CDSME program workshops using the Upstream Social Interaction Risk Scale (U-SIRS-13) and Retrospective Assessment of Connection Impact (RACI)
- Received secure data reports, along with technical assistance on how to understand and use the data to learn more about the impact of their program on social connectedness and engage in continuous quality improvement

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CDSME COP
Findings & Reflections

Matthew Lee Smith, PhD, MPH, CHES, CHW-I, FGSA, FSBM, FAAHB

Professor: Department of Applied Health Science

Professor: Department of Health and Wellness Design

Director: Center for Health by Design (CHxD)

Director: Healthy Aging Writing Lab (HAWL)

School of Public Health

Indiana University – Bloomington

Community of Practice

- Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) programs
  - Widely available with a long history of effectiveness
  - Documented in randomized and pragmatic trials

- Although the *direct benefits* of CDSME programs are known, less is known about the ***indirect benefits*** of these workshops
  - Regular, facilitated small group interaction
  - Focus on improving symptom management and social supports
  - Linkage to healthcare providers and other community resources

Each site considered **logistics** of their local evaluation

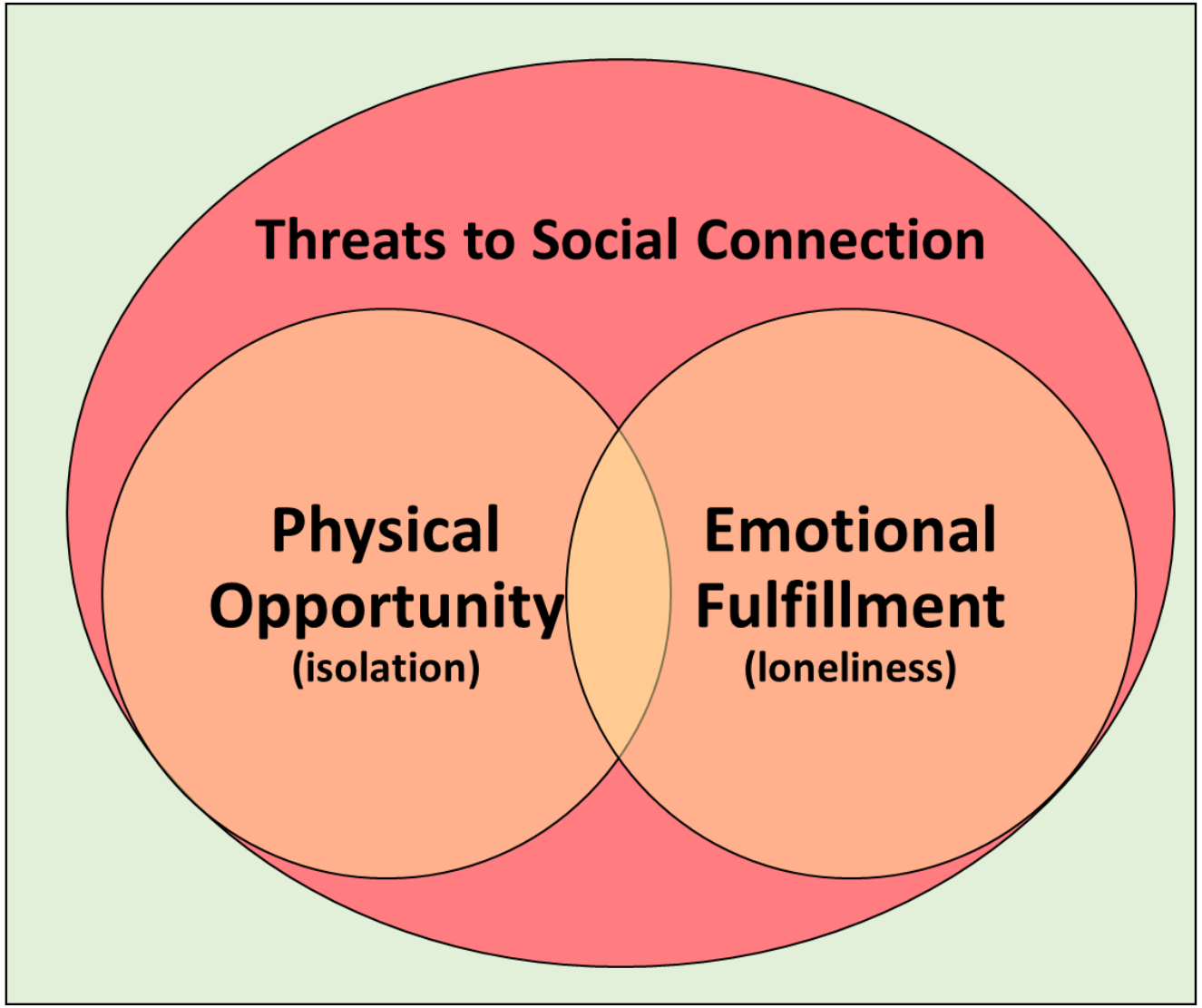
Attempted to maintain apples-to-apples outcome comparisons across sites

- Purpose: To *retrospectively* learn about the connection-related impact of CDSME programs that serve older adults and people with disabilities

- Uniform connection measures
  - Upstream Social Interaction Risk Scale (U-SIRS-13) (pronounced “users”)
  - Retrospective Assessment of Connection Impact (RACI)

U-SIRS-13

- I feel isolated from others
- I lack companionship
- I feel no one really knows me well
- I can find companionship when I want it
- Attend social clubs, residents' groups, or committees
- Attend religious groups
- I avoid socializing because it is hard to understand conversations, especially when there is background noise
- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with my family
- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with my friends
- I have as much contact as I would like with people I feel close to and who I can trust and confide
- There are enough people I feel close to and could call for help
- I am content with my friendships and relationships
- I miss having people around me



Source: Smith, M. L., & Barrett, M. E. Development and Validation of the Upstream Social Interaction Risk Scale (U-SIRS-13): A Scale to Assess Threats to Social Connectedness among Older Adults. *Frontiers in Public Health*, *12*, 1454847.

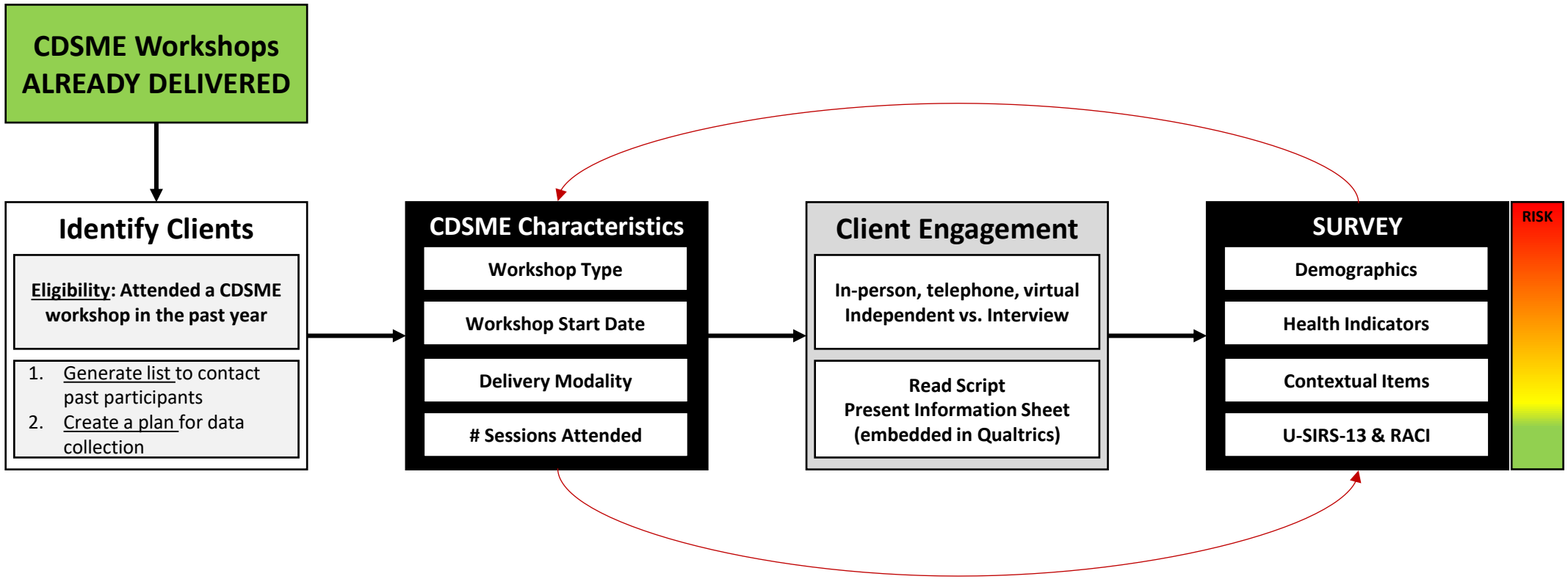
Retrospective Assessment of Connection Impact (RACI)

- Developed to *retrospectively* assess participants' perceptions
- Responses are *directly related to program/service*, not general feelings of connection
- Asks participants, "How much has XXX given you opportunity to…?"

	13-ITEM RACI
S	Meet new people
	Make friends
	Interact with people I know
	Interact with people who are different from me
F	Create a sense of group belonging
	Maintain my relationships
	Feel less lonely or isolated
	Give emotional support to others
	Get emotional support from others
Q	Feel satisfied with my relationships
	Meet my desired level of socializing
	Feel less excluded
	Create less conflict, adversity, or strain in my interactions with others

- 13 items
- Assesses aspects of structure, function, and quality
- Easy to administer (one-time administration; takes ~2 minutes)
- Appropriate across sectors
- Appropriate for participants of age groups

Evaluation Flow

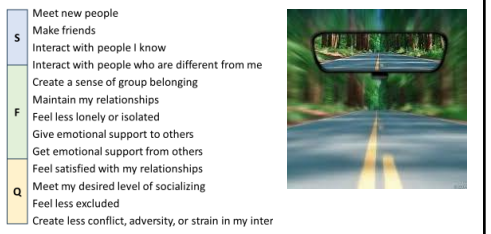


Survey Instrument

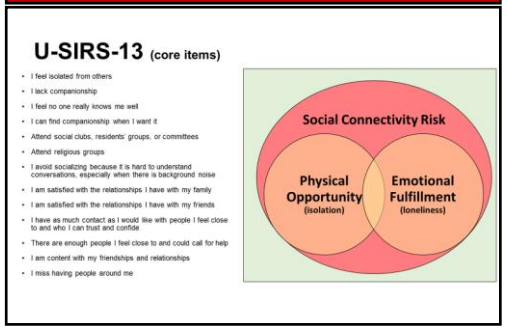
CDSME Workshop Info (5 items)

- Workshop type
- Workshop start date
- Delivery modality
- Language
- Attendance

Retrospective Assessment of Impact about CDSME (13 items)



Current Social Disconnectedness (13 items)



Demographics (4 items)

- Year Born
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Race

Contextual Items Associated with Social Disconnection (4 items)

- Live Alone
- Transportation
- Technology
- Worry about $$

Health Indicators (6 items)

- Because of physical, mental, or emotional condition, difficulty:
  - Doing errands
  - Concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Impairments
  - Vision; Hearing; Mobility; Dressing/Bathing

Delivery Characteristics

Data Contributions by Site

	Engaged		In Analyses	
	n	%	n	%
AgeOptions	12	11.7%	11	13.6%
AgeOptions-e	14	13.6%	8	9.9%
HL4ME	6	5.8%	6	7.4%
MARC	1	1.0%	1	1.2%
MARC-e	5	4.9%	1	1.2%
NCCHW	5	4.9%	4	4.9%
NCHHN	41	39.8%	34	42.0%
PICF	19	18.4%	16	19.8%
Total	**103**		**81**	

* 18 declined to participate after initiating the survey; 4 had missing data

- Of the 103, 18 declined to participate & 4 had missing data
- 93% CDSMP; 6% DSMP; 1% CPSMP
- 73% in-person; 27% virtual or hybrid
- On average, attended 5.0 (of 6) workshop sessions
  - 92% successful completion (4+ of 6 sessions)

Participant Characteristics (n=81)

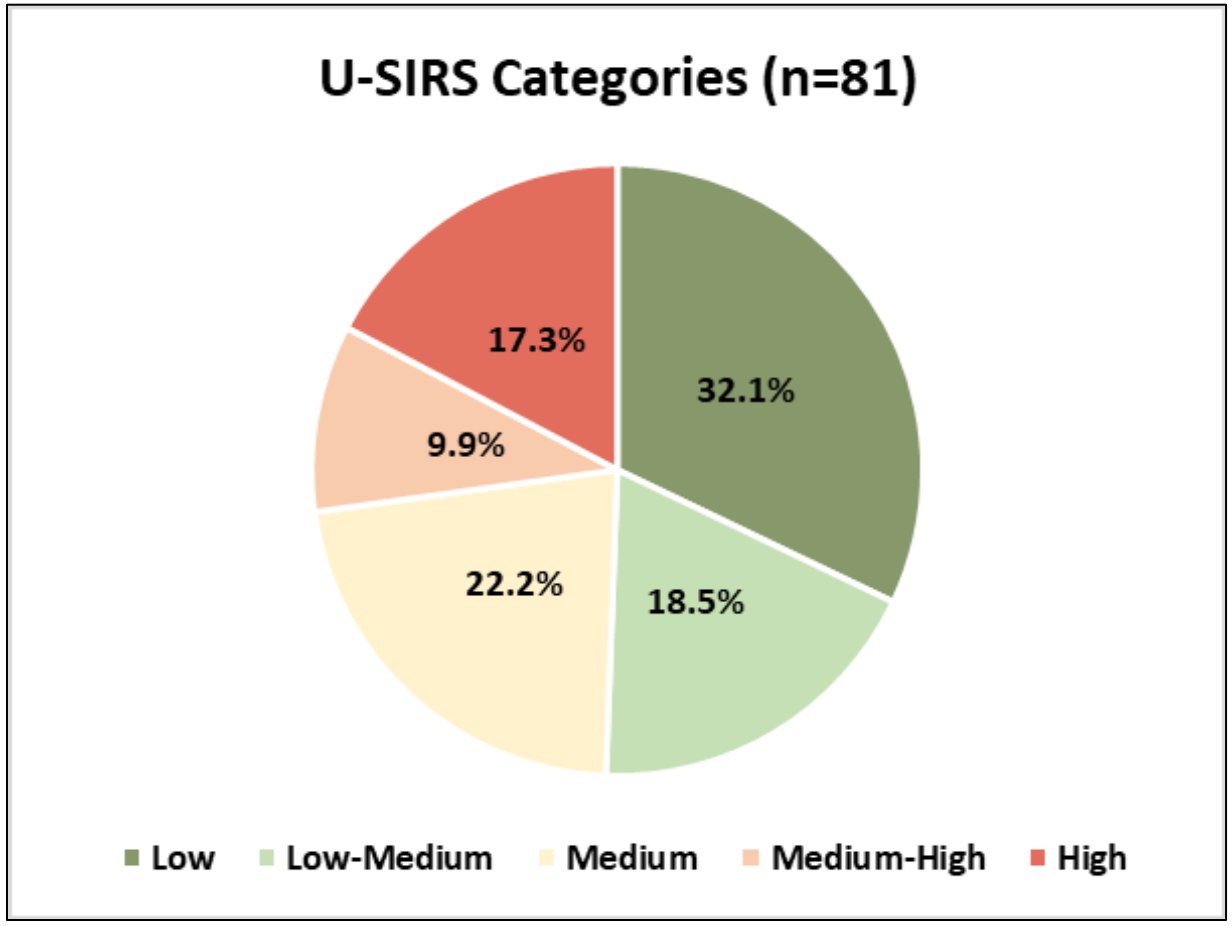
- Average age 68.9 years
- 76% female
- 3% Hispanic
- 72% White; 20% Black; 3% Asian; 5% Other/Multiple
- 45% live alone
- 33% worry/stress about money to meet basic needs
- *Impairments*: 28% mobility; 9% hearing; 5% vision
- 14% difficulty doing errands

Post-Workshop Social Disconnectedness

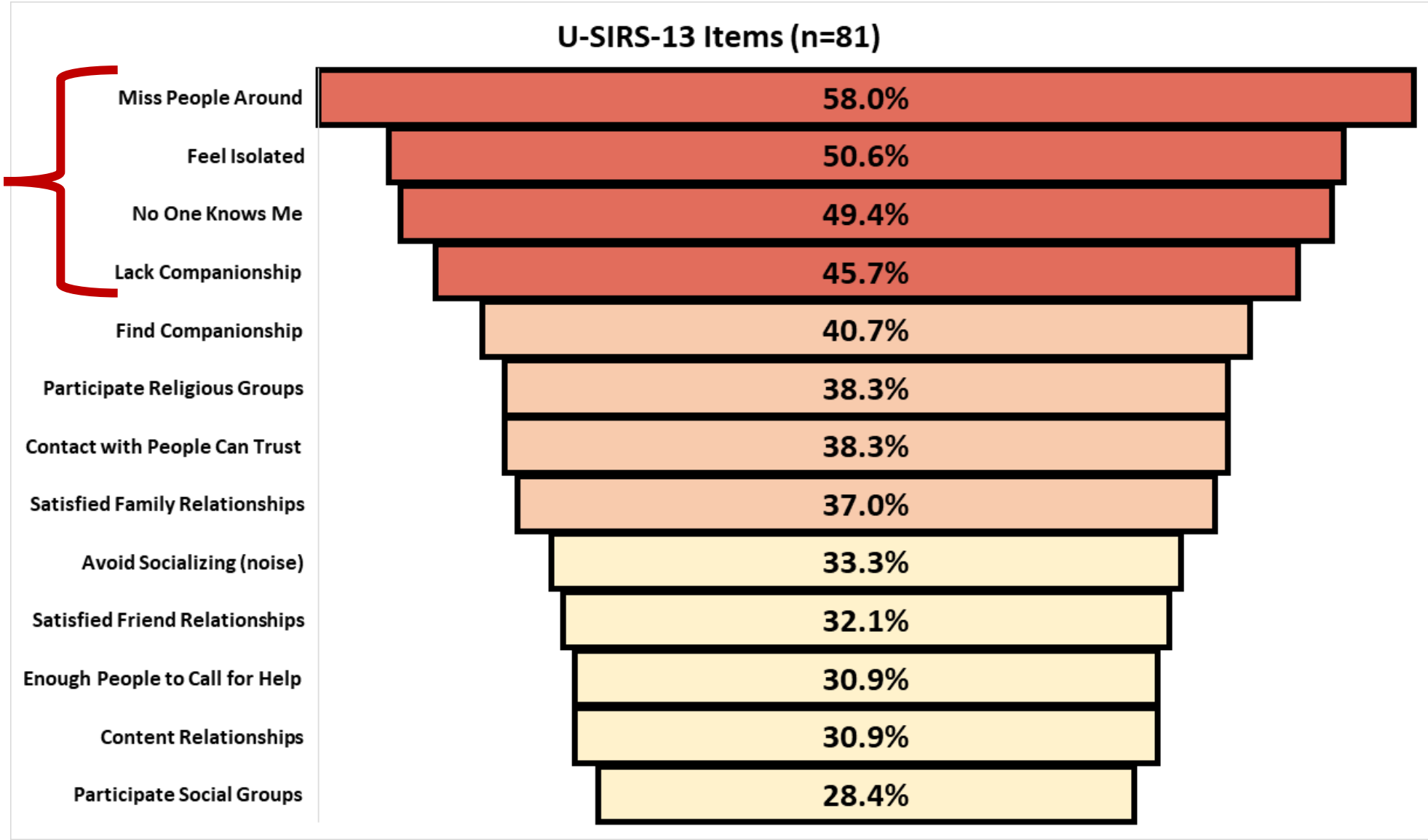
- Average U-SIRS-13 score: 5.14 (of 13)
  - Cronbach's Alpha = 0.88 [strong]

- 49% threats to social connectedness
  - 22% Yellow
  - 10% Orange
  - 17% Red

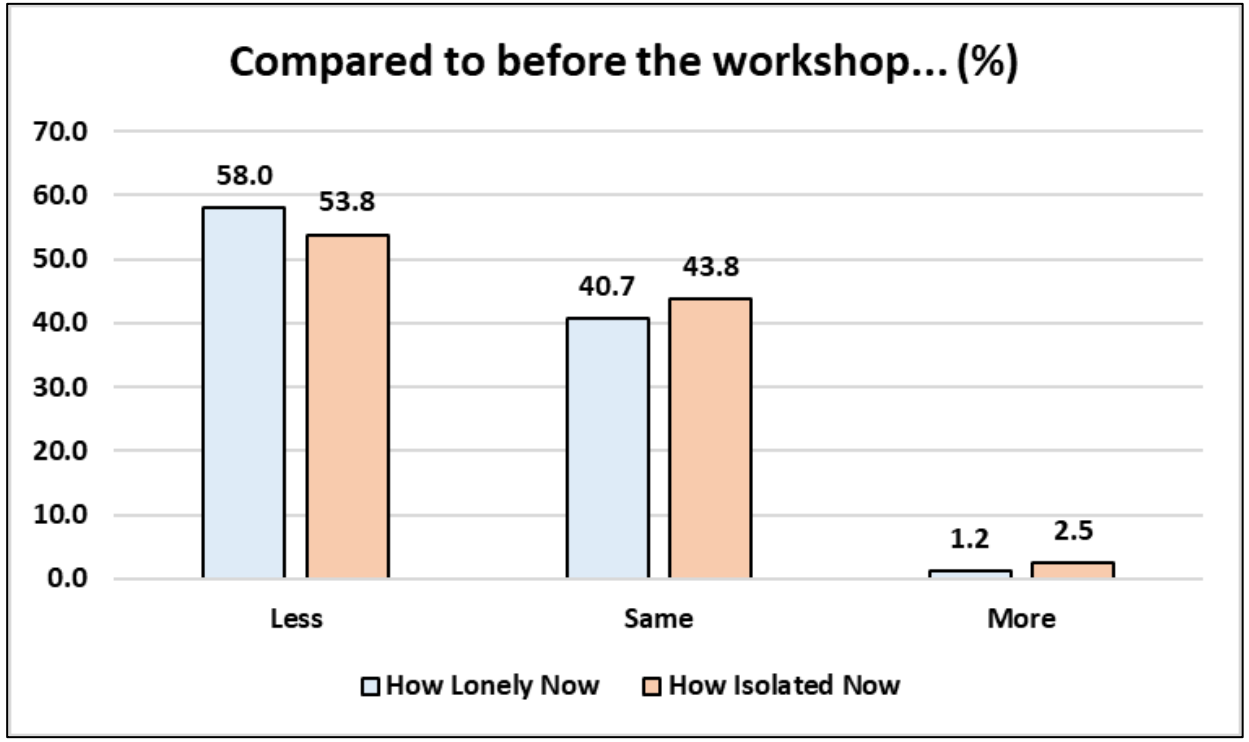
- Suggests
  - Moderate risk, on average
  - Additional connection opportunities needed post-workshop (may depend on time since workshop occurred)



Social Disconnectedness

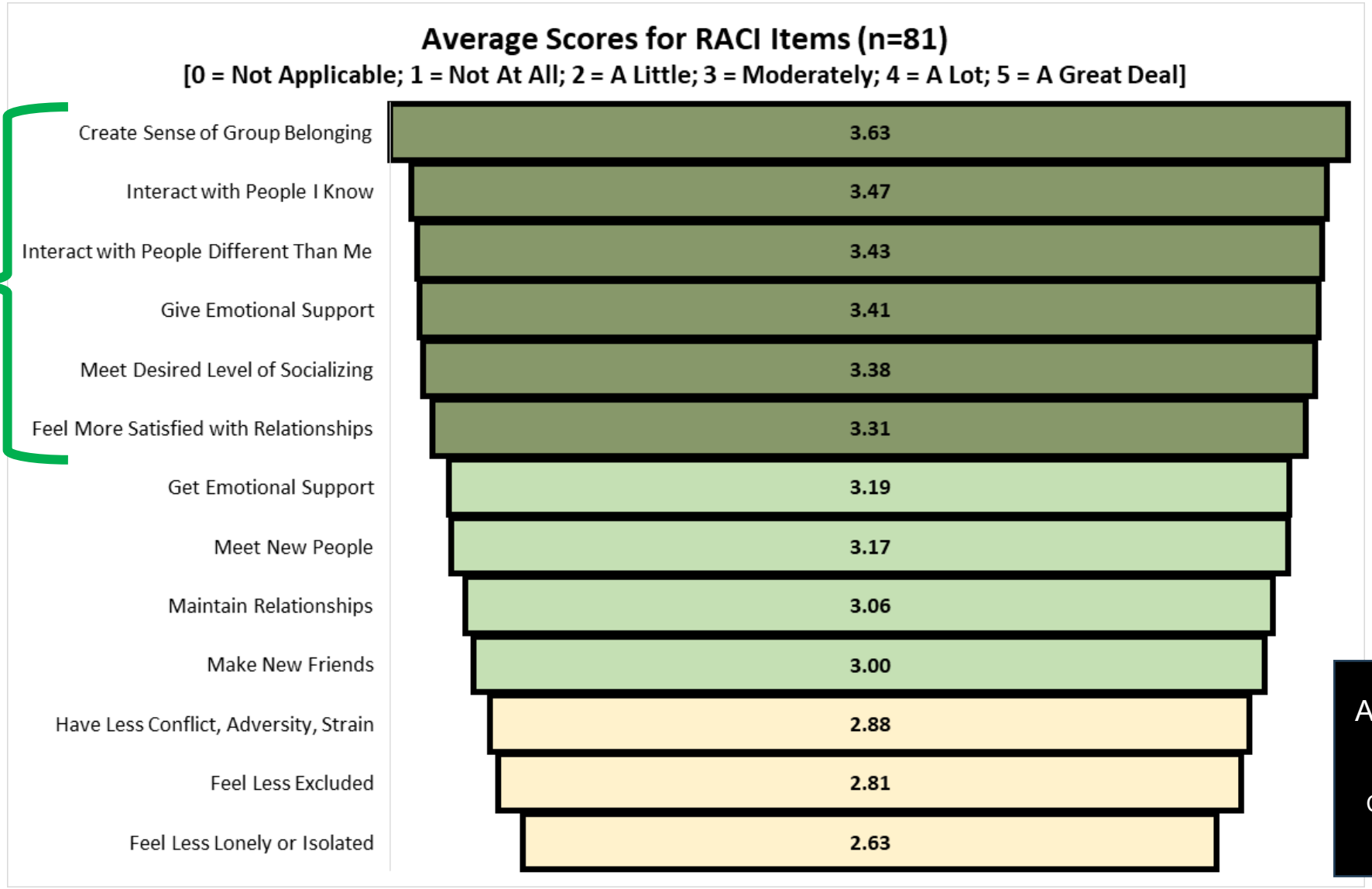


Perceptions about CDSME Workshops



- Compared to before the workshop
  - 58% less lonely; 41% about the same
  - 54% less isolated; 44% about the same
- 73% satisfied with workshop “a lot” or “a great deal”

Social Connection Impact of CDSME



Average RACI score: 41.37 (of 65)

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.92 [strong]

Correlations

Correlations Between Connection Scales, Perceived Improvements, and Workshop Engagement								
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
U-SIRS-13	**1**	1	-0.463**	-0.576**	0.267*	0.364**	-0.039	0.046
RACI	**2**		1	0.736**	-0.331**	-0.356**	0.047	-0.140
Workshop help more connected in future	**3**			1	-0.409**	-0.482**	0.047	0.028
Compared to before, how lonely now	**4**				1	0.623**	-0.243*	0.004
Compared to before, how isolated now	**5**					1	-0.040	-0.012
Workshop attendance	**6**						1	-0.142
Months since starting CDSME workshop	**7**							1
* P<0.05; ** P<0.01								

- Participants who reported higher workshop impact reported lower disconnectedness
- Participants who reported lower disconnectedness reported having the less loneliness and isolation as before workshop
- Participants who reported higher workshop impact reported having the less loneliness and isolation as before workshop
- Participants who reported workshops would help them become more connected in the future reported higher workshop impact and lower disconnectedness
- Participants with higher attendance reported feeling less lonely now compared to before the workshop

Comparisons of Impact

- On average, compared to before the workshop, participants who reported being:

LESS LONELY NOW VS. BEFORE

- Less disconnected
- More workshop connection impact
- Higher belief that workshop will help future connection
- **Attended more workshop sessions**

LESS ISOLATED NOW VS. BEFORE

- Less disconnected
- More workshop connection impact
- Higher belief that workshop will help future connection

LESS LONELY NOW VS. BEFORE

- Make friends
- Interact with people I know
- Create sense of group belonging
- Maintain relationships
- Get emotional support
- Feel satisfied with relationships
- Meet desired level of socializing
- **Feel less lonely or isolated**
- **Less conflict, adversity, strain**

LESS ISOLATED NOW VS. BEFORE

- Make friends
- Interact with people I know
- Create sense of group belonging
- Maintain relationships
- Get emotional support
- Feel satisfied with relationships
- Meet desired level of socializing
- **Meet new people**

Overview of Key Findings

- CDSME workshops create opportunities for connection
  - Impact spans aspects of structure, function, and quality
- Workshops have lasting benefits to decrease feelings of loneliness and isolation
  - Higher attendance as associated with feeling less lonely
- Those perceiving more benefit from workshops:
  - Lower post-workshop disconnection
  - Positive outlook about future connection

Thank you!

Matthew Lee Smith

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Questions and Discussion

Please share your questions or comments in the Q&A box.

New Opportunity! Apply for the 2026 Community of Practice

- Seeking applications from aging and disability network organizations for a community of practice (COP) focusing on measuring the social connection impact of Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) programs through pre- and post-test measures.
- Each COP member will have access to the collection instrument and protocols, technical assistance from the Commit to Connect Resource Center, expertise from an expert evaluator, and five peer-to-peer learning sessions.
- Find more information:

https://committoconnect.org/communities-of-practice/

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COP Overview

- Objectives:
  - Work with COP members to collaboratively implement a flexible, yet standardized evaluation process for their CDSME program
  - Build capacity of members by providing training and technical assistance to COP members
  - Use findings to build the social connection evidence-base for CDSME programs
- Audience: Aging and disability network organizations
- **Join us for an informational session on this opportunity tomorrow, February 12, from 2:00-2:30 p.m. ET.**
- Applications are due by Friday, February 27, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

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Upcoming Events

- **Tomorrow! Community of Practice Information Session:**
  - February 12, 2:00-2:30 p.m. ET
- **Office Hours:**

Highlighting Innovative Social Connection Programs

- Learn from Julie Burkley, Director of Programs with FriendshipWorks
- February 25 from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. ET.

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Thank you!

- Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes.
- The recording will be available on www.committoconnect.org/events
- For further questions, contact us at: info@committoconnect.org

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