



Loneliness doesn't  
come from being alone;  
it comes from feeling  
that nobody cares.

*lessonslearnedinlife.com*

### **raison d'etre**

One of the pages I follow on Facebook posted the above recently. A quick reflection, and I thought, this makes some kind of sense, so I reposted it, getting many affirmations in return. There are those of course who would argue, and for good reason, that this is not so. Examples include those, who, following a long and wonderful marriage - lose

their life-partners through death. Others I know have lost children, siblings, parents, or good friends. In these cases, I have no doubt that the "absent people/person" can create the deepest kind of loneliness, so deep that even when others care, it continues to break the hearts of the ones left behind. Death of course isn't the only cause of such consequences and we might all create lists of other variables that contribute to such loss and loneliness. Can you imagine living or working in a community surrounded by such souls?

Four weeks ago another chapter in my life was opened and I became the **Coordinator of Spiritual and Religious Care** (chaplain) in just such a community. I hold this position at the IOOF Seniors Homes, Inc., in Barrie, ON. This is a not for profit campus of several services with a positive and healthy record even and especially in these days of Covid19.

When I arrived in my last church assignment one of the first things to catch my attention was the motto written on the wall behind the pulpit and visible to all worshippers. This is what it said:

**Philippians 1:6**

**"... he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion..."**

During my eight year stay, this came to heart and mind often, and I made it a point to read it nearly every time I entered the hall as well as to claim the promise it contained. "What does this have to do with your current writing?" you ask. Well, it so happens that the IOOF Seniors homes also has a motto, and being a creature of habit, it is my intention to do likewise while I'm here, and to do all that is in my power to meaningfully demonstrate its truth both as an individual and as a team member.

The motto:

**"Caring is our reason for being!"**

I've not yet seen it written on any of the walls here but it is on promotional materials as well as our business cards. Being a lover of words my curiosity challenges me to check out exactly what they mean. I had a generic idea as to the meaning of "caring" but might there be something about it that I did not know? What was its etymology? This is what I found:

**CARING**

***Adjective: displaying kindness and concern for others.***

***Noun: the work or practice of looking after those unable to care for themselves, especially sick and elderly people.***

You saw it right?

*"...especially sick and elderly people."  
Wow! Who knew?*

By the way, since arriving at my post during this pandemic, but for everyone wearing masks and having their temperature checked when they sign in and out along with the distancing, things are pretty normal around here. Management, workers and residents have this place humming along and to date - no Covid!

While "caring" won't relieve everyone's loneliness or even all of one person's pain, I'm already swelling with pride, happy becoming one of the team, and excited about the adventure unfolding! These people care!

I care!

Randy C. Hicks  
Coordinator of Spiritual  
And Religious Care  
(CHAPLAIN)

**“Caring is our reason for being!”**