

Silver Linings of COVID-19

Older Adults and COVID-19: One Year Later



It's Not All Doom and Gloom

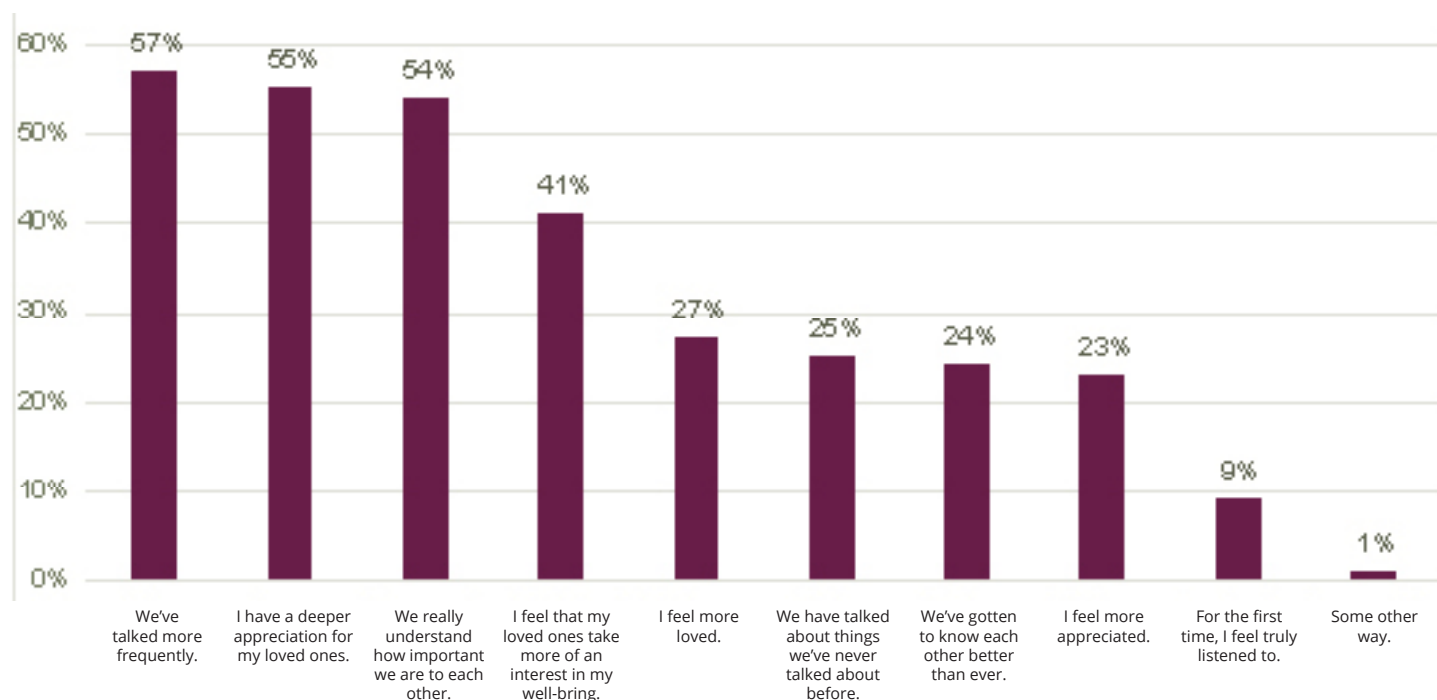
The last year has been littered with headlines of the grim outcomes for seniors across the U.S. and around the world. In addition to disproportionate impacts on physical health, older adults have been shouldering the burden of social isolation requirements and requests – abstaining from visits with grandchildren, prohibited from receiving visitors, missing cherished family gatherings and celebrations. It's been hard to see the light.

But there has been light in the past year for older adults. There are **“silver linings.”**

A Deeper Connection for Many

Nearly one-third of older adults (**29%**) feels a deeper connection to their loved ones today than before social distancing measures began in their community. Those with a deeper connection with loved ones attribute this to more conversations with loved ones (**57%**), a deeper appreciation and understanding for each other (**55%** and **54%**), and loved ones taking more of an interest in their well-being (**41%**).

Ways in which connection with loved ones has grown deeper



Q3. (Asked of those who feel a deeper connection to loved ones) In which of the following ways has your connection with our loved ones grown deeper? Please select all that apply.

Overall, **79%** of older adults have been able to maintain or deepen their relationships.

Similarly, in spite of all the barriers to connection over the past year – particularly for older adults – more than half (**51%**) of seniors report the frequency of their communications and connections with loved ones has increased or at least stayed the same.

And these connections have crossed generations. One in four seniors feels more connected to younger loved ones in the last year.

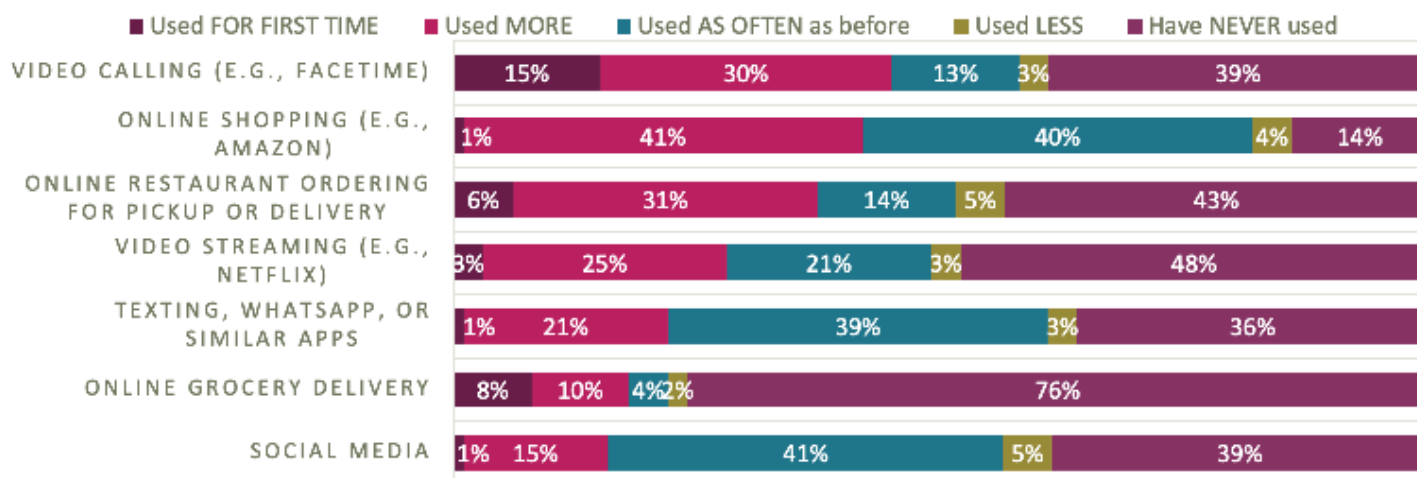
Technology for the Better

Seniors who increased their use of communications technology during the pandemic are four times more likely to have connected with loved ones more than those who used these tools less or not at all.

Older adults are becoming more tech savvy as well, one in four (**28%**) feels more comfortable using new technology than they did one year ago.

Some haven't only increased their use of technology; they are using these technologies for the first time. For **15%** of older adults, the last year got them using video calling (such as FaceTime) for the first time ever.

Technology use during the pandemic



Q4. For each of the following technologies, please indicate if you used this since the start of the pandemic.

Look to the Future

The silver linings are catching on. Two-thirds (**66%**) of older adults feel more hopeful about the next year.

And the last year has helped shape the plans many older adults have for their future. For example, while an overwhelming majority of seniors prefers to live in their home as they age, more than half (**57%**) are even more committed to staying home than they were a year ago.

And even as the masks begin to come off and older adults are once again joining their loved ones for in-person gatherings on a regular basis, three of four older adults (**72%**) plan to still use technology to communicate with others. In fact, nearly one in three (30%) will use technology to help them with care in their own home.

“Two-thirds (66%) of older adults feel more hopeful about the next year.”