

The Power of Connection: Inspiration for Seniors Facing Isolation

Explore the vital role of social connection in healthy aging. Learn how a short film and expert advice offer hope and strategies to overcome loneliness in later life.

By [Susan Mangiero](#) (5/19/25)

For those gracing their fifties and beyond, you start to measure time in gray hairs and moments of “been there” wisdom. Everyday work stress gives way to planning life after retirement, researching senior discounts and selecting the best [Medicare](#) supplement plan. You focus on accomplishing things sooner than later, realizing how the definition of long term radically differs from someone in their twenties. Perhaps the saddest marker of growing older is having to count the number of family members and friends who leave us for the great beyond. As your life changes in structure and tone, you face a new and frightening challenge of living without them. The boundaries of a world you once believed too big to consume shrink in size. You feel invisible and separated from the beating pulse of action.

Feeling lost is no surprise. According to the [National Institute on Aging](#), social connection is the cornerstone of a fulfilling life. As the years pass, and the people who populate your community disappear, loneliness and social isolation is inevitable. The toll on your health is far from trivial, often resulting in added medical expenses and a faster decline in physical and mental well-being. According to [Honor](#), described as the world’s largest home care network, we are experiencing a global epidemic of [senior loneliness](#). Feeling isolated and unseen is a tragedy at any age, but especially when employers and advertisers emphasize the importance of youth.

To combat the negatives surrounding age, and to provide hope and inspiration, filmmaker George Siougas wrote and directed a charming short film about the joy of coming out of the shadows. In just twenty minutes, “[The One Note Man](#)” (available to watch on Amazon Prime) introduces the audience to the plight of a widow whose only claim to fame is a nightly blow on his bassoon, followed by his bicycle ride home. He is single, intimidated and sad. One night, the magic begins when the protagonist hears and sees a beautiful violinist on stage. Played convincingly by famed British actor Jason Watkins, the hero gradually gains the courage to orchestrate a new romance and a new start in life. Read why Mr. Siougas chose to tell this memorable story about the need to have friends and purpose.



George Siougas

Q: What was your inspiration for “The One Note Man”?

A: A funny cartoon strip with the same name inspired me. Although it was published in 1921 by British illustrator [H.M. Bateman](#), the concept of being stuck in a routine, lonely and perhaps complacent, resonates through time. The more I stared at the pictures, the more I wondered about the comic potential of telling a lighthearted tale about someone who is brave enough to break his chains of monotony. A sucker for romance, I later added the love angle.

Q: You mention comedy. Is it important to educate and inspire others by using humor?

A: I never set out to educate, merely to entertain and to ask a couple of interesting questions. Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, two grandfathers of silent cinema, were masterful at entertaining audiences with no words. They utilized their body language and facial expressions to convey their emotions. “The One Note Man” has no dialogue other than the narration provided by the legendary Sir Ian McKellen.

Q: Do you consider music as another character in your film?

A: Yes. Music is a universally accepted way to communicate and share our emotions. Music is a powerful tool to tell stories. Our Oscar-winning composer Stephen Warbeck did an amazing job in telling the story, his music replacing dialogue in the final climax of the film where the One Note Man tries to convince the conductor to let the violinist “talk” to him. In the same scene, the violin and bassoon embark on a musical dialogue which Stephen wrote beautifully.

Q: How did you grow personally during the film's production since you mainly work in television?

A: I had never scripted a film without dialogue, so I took a chance by trying something new. Like our hero, I was scared and excited at the same time. I love being in the water when my feet aren't quite touching the bottom! Makes me feel alive.

Q: When you began writing your short film, what themes did you decide to emphasize?

A: The archetypal themes of wanting to be loved, wanting to have a voice and the importance of persevering (it is those who persevere who move forward in life) were all themes that interest me. I shaped the story to encourage others not to focus on the past but to embrace the present, which is where I believe happiness lies. Grief is real, but I always want people to know there is the possibility of finding friendship and maybe love again. Nothing is hopeless, no matter how dire a situation looks at a given moment. I purposely designed the main character to be a dignified and kind man. Thanks to Jason's performance, audience members react to this ordinary hero with a mixture of respect and empathy because they identify with him. They cheer for his triumph when he finally finds romance and realizes he doesn't have to be alone.

Q: Congratulations to you and your team. You won the Audience Choice Award at the Palm Springs International ShortFest and you were Oscar shortlisted in the Best Live Action Short Film category in 2023. I count sixty-three international wins. Do you intend to make additional films with uplifting messages?

A: Absolutely. I am currently attached to direct three feature films in the UK and I can't wait to share them with the audience.

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Susan Mangiero, PhD, CFA®, MBA, MFA is a financial journalist, ghostwriter, and content strategist with articles, books, and thought leadership work appearing in more than one hundred business outlets. Her past work includes trading derivatives on Wall Street, launching a knowledge-sharing digital platform for institutional investors, teaching investments to corporate and university audiences, and testifying as an expert witness about retirement plan governance, financial advisory methods, and investment best practices. Learn more about Susan Mangiero by visiting <https://www.linkedin.com/in/smangiero/>.