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Culture Change in Practice

Meet me on the Web



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posted by Steph Kilen

Social networking on the Web is not just for kids anymore. For elders, a virtual community is suited to best serve the real need for social interaction. In the late stages of life, and of course when one is living in a nursing home, there's a good chance that family and friends are scattered geographically. Limited mobility leaves elders dependent on others for initiating visits. With email, suddenly no one is so far away.

networks, there are discussion groups, photo sharing, blogs and comment boards. It's easy to lose track of time this way and while it is still a screen and not a face you are facing, humanity and discovery still comes through. The women on ElderwomanSpace talk about everything from gardens to their families to the issues facing elderwomen.

So, how can we get folks in nursing homes on the Web? Do elders have access to computers at your facility? Any ideas about getting folks interested activities on the net? The Web is really the most immediate tool we have for combating the isolation elders face in nursing homes and it is right in front of our faces, literally. How can we put it to good use?

"Culture Change in Practice" is our own weblog where people can become involved in a conversation about Culture Change as it is practiced by professionals in real nursing homes. Feel free to join the conversation, or post a comment about something you have learned on your journey.

www.culturechangenow.com/weblog

While it's great to be in touch with loved ones, it's also nice to meet new people and the Web can help there as well. Inspired by the idea of *MySpace* (<http://www.myspace.com/>) – meeting new people around the world with whom you share interests – but finding it quite youth slanted, *Marian Van Eyk McCain* (<http://www.elderwoman.org/bio.html>) started *ElderwomanSpace* at <http://www.elderwoman.org/elderwomanspace.html> for social networking for women of the "third age." It's an offshoot of her *Elderwoman site* (<http://www.elderwoman.org/>) Just like other online social

