



## Toronto: Sept 29 – Story 3

Anthony Muhammad: I really just wanted to talk about my parents. My mom has severe dementia, and my dad has become the primary caregiver care provider. And they did seek out some senior services in Toronto, and it was set up for different communities than our own, the Caribbean community. And there was a certain unfamiliarity.

And as a result of that, they, they never go to any of the senior social stuff. My dad he regretted ever coming to Canada in the 1960s. And he wishes that he was home where he could be warm and go outside anytime, he wanted to. And, and the result of the there's also, Caribbean culture is much more social on the outside. So, there are places to gather, like whether it's the corner, or the beach, or the or the rum shop for you know, like, at least there's somewhere where people gather.

And the epidemic of loneliness that COVID really emphasized across Canada, was really felt differently by older folks who were already lonely. Already, you know, lacking in, in connection.

My name is Anthony Muhammad. And I'm a brown, gay man living in Toronto, who has reached the stage where people have started calling me an elder and I'm, like, "Oh, hello, things are changing, right?"

And within, like my own community, like the queer and trans community in Toronto, that epidemic of loneliness was really emphasized among the elders within our community like and it wasn't just about loneliness, it was about opportunities for connection with anyone, to express sexuality. And as I get older within the community, I'm realizing that those issues are starting to impact my own life. So I feel like as a community, we really need to come together and have a discussion about this. And I'm not sure how to advance the dialogue without exhibits like this, you know, COVID in the House of Old.