

Losing Our Other Significant Others: Without Social Interaction, Many are Placing Unrealistic Expectations on Live-in Partners

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After a year locked down, many Canadians find their community ties weakened. The characters who used to populate everyday life – work colleagues, gym buddies, craft groups, pub friends, local business owners – have dimmed from view.

Together, they formed a community of “other significant others” – OSOs for short – the people we turn to for a multitude of social and emotional needs. Social psychology professor Eli Finkel coined the term to describe people who help us outsource, so we don’t overwhelm our romantic partners.

A year into the global crisis, [stressed and alienated](#) from their OSOs, people are increasingly relying on live-in partners to fill these roles – [straining their relationships](#) with unrealistic expectations in the process.

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