

Combatting Loneliness

Everything you think you know about loneliness is probably wrong.

There are a lot of **misunderstandings and myths** about loneliness. Here are a few:

- Loneliness is the natural feeling that comes from being alone.
- The solution to loneliness is to not be alone.
- If you have to be alone, you have to be lonely.

But we know **this can't be right**. All of us have had moments when we were alone but didn't feel lonely and/or times when we felt lonely even though we weren't alone. So what's going on here?

Loneliness isn't about being alone, it's about lack of attachment and connection.

When you look at it this way, new possibilities open up:

- Loneliness is the natural feeling that comes from not feeling seen, heard and valued.
- The solution to loneliness is to experience a sense that we are valuable.
- If you have to be alone, you are still valuable and don't have to be lonely.

Other people have a part to play, but they're not the whole story.

One natural source for experiences that make us feel seen, heard and valuable is genuine, healthy connections with others that build us up. During times like now, when we are all experiencing increased isolation, making a point of connecting with important others in our lives is an important tool to combatting isolation.

Key question: Despite the constraints, how can I make a meaningful connection with the people who build me up?

Your best weapon against loneliness is you!

This is an important time to foster the skill of building yourself up and enjoying your own company. Are you truly seeing, hearing and valuing yourself and all that you have to offer right now? Are you caring about your own feelings and thoughts? If you were a good friend spending time with you right now, what would you be saying and doing? Are you doing those things for yourself?

Key question: How can I enjoy spending time with the wonderful person that is me?