

Loneliness and Social Isolation

There are 10 million people over the age of 65 living in Britain today, of which 51% are over the age of 75 and living alone. Everyone gets lonely from time to time, regardless of age. But older people can be particularly vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation. It's estimated that among people over 65, up to 16% say they feel lonely and 12% feel isolated. 1 in 10 suffer 'intense' loneliness.

Why may you be feeling lonely?

Loneliness and social isolation can be caused by the loss of a partner or dear friend(s) and your immediate family lives a long way away. It can be a derivative of a debilitating health problem, such as arthritis which can affect your mobility. Even if you live in sheltered accommodation you may be feeling this way because you just don't want to bother your neighbours or be a burden to anyone.

The impact of loneliness

Loneliness can impact your well-being and quality of life more than you think, and can significantly affect your physical health.

Whereas personal contact, healthy relationships and feeling a part of your community has an

enormously positive impact on your health and well-being and has been proven to help people live longer.

Helplines available

Feeling lonely is a normal human emotion, and can touch everyone's lives at some point. It's simply a sign of wanting human contact. It is often triggered by your personal circumstances, or by an external situation. If you have been feeling lonely for a while, a first step is to notice and identify it. Then begin to think about what you could do to help yourself. Talking to someone really helps.

The Silver Line

Founded by Esther Rantzen CBE, The Silver Line is the only free



confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Their specially trained staff:

1. Offer information, friendship and advice
2. Link callers to local groups and services
3. Offer regular befriending calls
4. Protect and support those who are suffering abuse and neglect.

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Call: **0800 4 70 80 90**
www.thesilverline.org.uk

New Telephone Befriending Service from the Licensed Trade Charity

If you used to work in the pubs, even in your retirement, the Licensed Trade Charity is dedicated to helping you and providing relevant support and care.

Our Telephone Befriending Programme goes one step further than a telephone helpline, and provides companionship and emotional support, with the view to getting you actively involved with your local community once more.

Find out how we helped Linda:
www.licensedtradecharity.org.uk/befriending

For an initial chat, please call Hilary on **01344 898 550** and ask about our Befriending Programme. Or go online and complete a contact sheet so we can give you a call back at a time that suits you. Hilary can also be emailed at hilary.bone@ltcharity.org.uk;

Group services

There are lots of different group services available, including day centres, such as lunch clubs, and social group schemes which can help you to widen your social circle. These services are self-help groups offering friendship, creative and social activities and health promotion.

Contact the Elderly

This is a national charity that organise a free Sunday afternoon tea party once a month for small group of people aged 75 and above – who live alone without nearby family and friends – in local communities across England, Scotland and Wales. The number of friendship groups is increasing as the number of volunteers and partnerships grow.



www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk

Community Navigator Scheme

Community Navigators are usually volunteers who offer emotional, practical and social support. They can help you to find appropriate means of support within your community. They'll visit you in your own homes to discuss any concerns you may have and they'll help to look into which service or community provision would be beneficial for you.

Contact your local authority to find out if there is a Community Navigator scheme in your area.

Other useful organisations

Age UK Call in Time

Age UK aims to improve later life for everyone through information and advice, services, campaigns, products, training and research. They offer a befriending service, assigning a befriender who provides friendly conversation and companionship on a regular basis over a long period of time. This relationship not only promotes wellbeing and confidence, but can also help people in later life to remain independent in their own homes.



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Call 0800 434 6105
www.ageuk.org.uk

The Campaign to End Loneliness

This is a campaign which draws on research and inspiration from across the UK to offer ideas to both individuals and organisations or charities working specifically with older people.



www.campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk

Independent Age



This is an information and advice service for older people, their families and Carers focusing on social care, welfare benefits and befriending services. They offer a range of free services to reduce isolation among older people including:

1. Live Wires telephone book/discussion group
2. Telephone Buddy system
3. Volunteer Visitor befriending scheme.

Call: **0800 319 6789**
Mon-Fri 8am to 8pm.
Weekend and Bank Holidays 9am to 5pm
Email: advice@independentage.org
www.independentage.org