

Feeling Lonely?

Everyone feels lonely sometimes. It's normal. But feeling lonely is no fun, particularly when it lasts for an extended period of time. When that happens, know that there are ways to feel better.



Common Reasons People Feel Lonely

- ▶ You're in an unfamiliar situation (e.g., living in a new city, going to a new school, in a new job).
- ▶ You feel different, like no one shares your interests, values, or personality.
- ▶ You feel like no one has time for you, whether it's family or friends.
- ▶ There is, or was, someone important in your life who is no longer there.
- ▶ You don't have the kinds of strong relationships you would like to have, like a best friend or a romantic relationship.

Maybe you're feeling lonely for one of these reasons, maybe it's something else, or maybe you don't know why you feel lonely, you just do.

Know that dealing with loneliness is temporary, and it's something that everyone goes through at some point in their lives. Also know that there are things you can do to change how you're feeling.

Keep reading to learn how you can feel more connected and less alone.

Ways to Deal with Loneliness

Plan ahead. Keep track of when you feel most lonely (weekends, holidays). Plan to do something you enjoy during those times. Have a hobby or project to work on; plan a movie night.

Help someone else. Helping others can make you feel good about yourself and lessen feelings of loneliness. Look for opportunities to volunteer in your community (e.g., animal shelter, community center, nursing home).

Use positive self-talk. If you have thoughts that are negative or critical, choose to think differently. Fill your thoughts with encouraging, positive messages. Maybe even write these messages down to read later.

Join a group. Your school has clubs, teams, and organizations you can join—these are great ways to meet students with similar interests. Also consider getting involved in community activities, youth groups, etc.

Push yourself a little. When you're feeling lonely, sometimes it's hard to motivate yourself to do anything. *Know that you have a lot to offer.* Make the effort to reach out, get involved, and connect with others!

Confide in someone you trust. Talk to a family member, counselor, or doctor about how you're feeling.

