

Loneliness Toolkit

Looking after your wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak

Loneliness is likely to be an increasing problem for many people as we deal with these uncertain times.

Having a mental health problem may increase your chances of feeling lonely, and feeling lonely may have a negative impact on your mental health. This can be a vicious cycle.

Think of feeling lonely like feeling hungry. Just as your body uses hunger to tell you that you need food, loneliness is a way of your body telling you that you need more social contact.

The simplest way to ease feelings of loneliness can be to try to meet people. However in these times, that will prove to be challenging...



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...this short guide will give you tips to help you avoid feeling lonely in the difficult times ahead.

Stay connected

There are many ways to stay connected to the ones you love. Make it your first job to ensure that you have phone numbers, email addresses and other contact details of all the people you'll want to stay in touch with.

Arrange daily phone calls with friends and family, at a designated time. Keep in a routine with them, even if you don't have much to chat about. Just checking in with someone can be helpful to both of you.

Make the most of technology, and make video calling your new norm. Seeing someone's face, seeing them smile and laugh can really boost your mood!

Create WhatsApp groups for multiple people to participate in and keep in touch, and of course share jokes and memes!



Helpful guides:

Click on the links below for guides on some of the technology mentioned here:

- [Using Skype](#) (video calling)
- [Using Facebook](#)
- [Using WhatsApp](#)
- [Using FaceTime](#) (Apple only)



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Get Online

It can feel like there's not much 'fun' to be had. This is not necessarily the case. We just have to rethink how we go about socialising. Keep an eye on social media for fun events. Pub landlords are hosting online pub quizzes. Friday night dance parties are happening from living rooms. Musicians are live streaming performances. It takes a little effort, but there is still fun to be had!

Don't compare yourself to others

It's important to make sure using social media isn't counterproductive. We often only see what other people want to share about their lives. That can make us feel like we're the only ones feeling lonely. Don't measure your own happiness against the things you see around you.



Join Facebook groups connected to your hobbies.

Look for fan pages and discussion boards of your favourite books, TV shows or movies and chat about a shared passion.

Mind runs a supportive online community called Elefriends where you can be yourself without any judgement. Sign up and log on at www.elefriends.org.uk.

Our Peer Support team will be online on Elefriends every day from 10am to 12 noon to offer advice and support or just to have a chat.

Use #SolentPeers to find us or just look out for our 'SolentMind' names.



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