

LONELINESS: FROM ISOLATION TO CONNECTION



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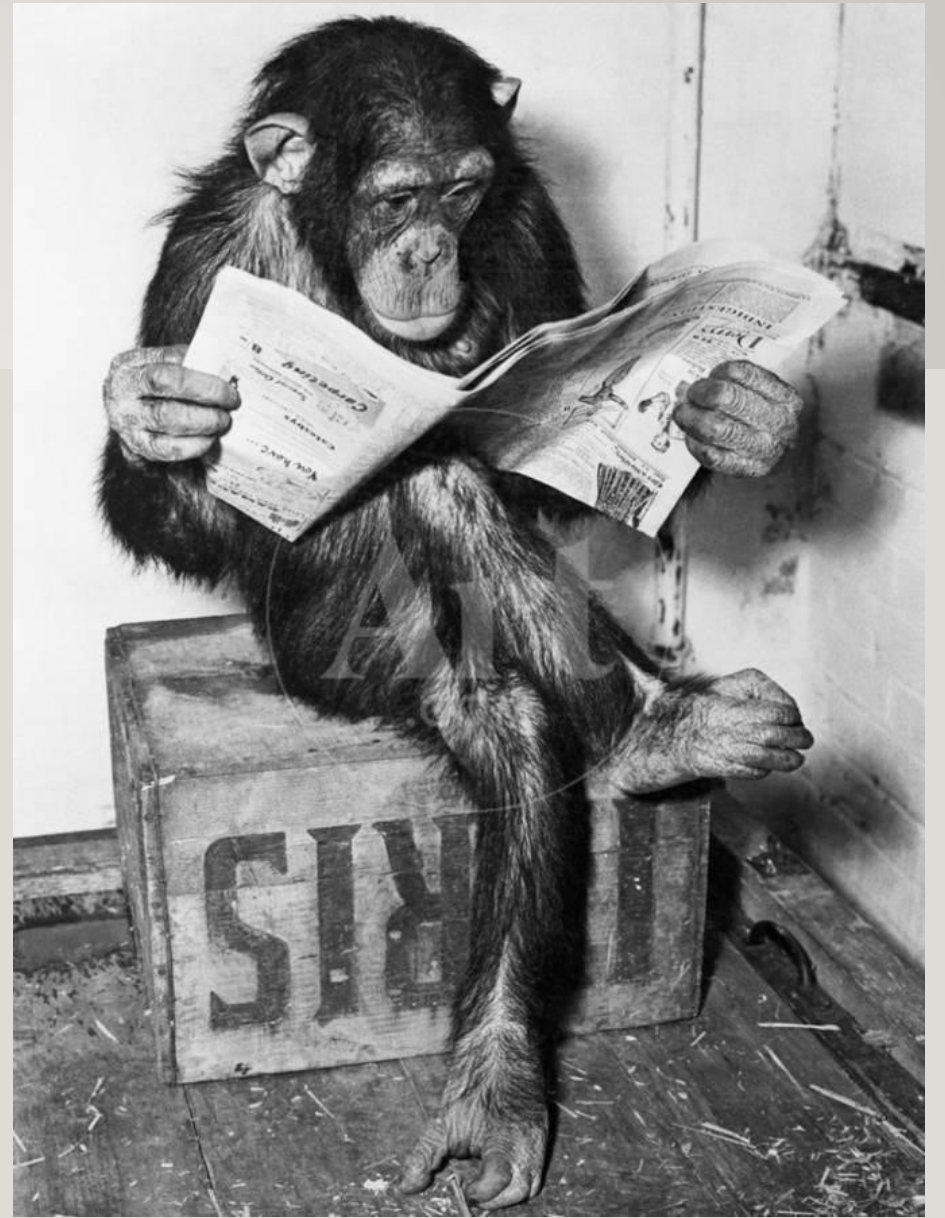
What is loneliness?



Lonely... but not always alone.



Loneliness In The News...



“Surgeon General Says There’s a Loneliness Epidemic”
([*The Washington Post*](#))

“Young People Report More Loneliness Than the Elderly”
([*USA Today*](#))

“The Biggest Threat Facing Middle-Aged Men Isn’t Obesity or Smoking, It’s Loneliness” ([*The Boston Globe*](#))

**“THE SURPRISING EFFECTS OF LONELINESS
ON HEALTH” ([*THE NYTIMES*](#))**

“Why Doctors are Prescribing Bingo, Not Pills, to Keep Patients Healthy” ([*CBC*](#))

“Loneliness Begets More Loneliness” ([*The Atlantic*](#))

Top 10 factors that have the greatest impact on lifespan and Overall Health (listed in increasing importance):

10. Clean Air

9. Treatment for Hypertension

8. Bodyweight

7. Exercise

6. Cardiac Rehabilitation

5. Flu Vaccination

4. Alcohol Consumption

3. Smoking

2. Having Close Relationships – Having people you can rely on.

1. Social Integration-How much you interact with ANYONE.

The New Trend of Social Prescribing



“When we spend too much time alone,
we get a little strange.”

-Anne Lamott



It's a biological need to feel we belong.
When we feel a sense of belonging we feel
safe, secure, and are more likely to reach
out to others.



How we can decrease loneliness in our own lives and in the lives of those around us?



Empathy...Not Sympathy

- Have an Outward Mindset
- Ask, how might this person find the interaction meaningful?
- It's all about relationship.

Look In Front of You

- Take advantage of the interactions you're already having.
- In-person interaction is best (i.e. eye contact, touch, voice).



Take Risks and Reach Out

Think P.A.C.E.

- Playful
- Accepting,
- Curious
- Empathetic



The Hook to Connect

- Focus on people's interests and strengths
- Create contexts for people to be together.



Needs-Focused

- Ask people what they need.
- Meet community needs and offer practical help (i.e. meals, rides, new immigrant needs, yard work, etc.).
- Churches can play an important role in tackling social isolation.



Anticipate Challenges and Be Creative

Having a community-focus helps avoid burnout while meeting the needs of “challenging people” (Outward Mindset).



Use Technology Wisely

Texting, email, Skype/FaceTime, phone calls, and social media can foster meaningful relationships.



Discussion...

Thank you

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