

**LET'S FACE LONELINESS TOGETHER:
ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME**

UNDERSTANDING LONELINESS TOOLKIT

CO-PRODUCED BY



The Great Get Together has connected once again with Marmalade Trust, producing this Understanding Loneliness Toolkit. It provides resources and advice on how to face loneliness this winter.

THE GREAT GET TOGETHER.

INSPIRED BY JO COX

The **Great Get Together** is inspired by Jo Cox MP, who was killed on the 16th of June, 2016. We ask people to come together and bridge divides, proving that we have, in Jo's words, **#moreincommon.**



THE GREAT WINTER GET TOGETHER

DECEMBER 14 – JANUARY 18

This winter, **let's face loneliness together:**
one connection
at a time.

Join us:

greatgettogether.org/sign_up



Marmalade Trust is a charity that raises awareness of loneliness and helps people to make new connections.

We envisage a society where anyone can talk freely and openly about loneliness – after all, it's a natural human emotion.

**For more information,
visit: marmaladetrust.org**

SECTION 1

What is loneliness?

SECTION 2

Loneliness during a pandemic

SECTION 3

Ways to connect this winter

SECTION 4

Further resources

1

WHAT IS LONELINESS?

Definition

Loneliness is a perceived mismatch between the quality or quantity of social connections that a person has and what they would like to have. It is a normal human emotion, signalling a need for more social contact.

You don't have to be on your own to feel lonely – especially if you don't feel understood or cared for by the people around you.

Causes

We each experience loneliness differently. Some key factors increase the likelihood of feeling lonely, including:

- Moving away from home
- Starting university or a new job
- Becoming a new parent
- Going through a relationship break-up
- Suffering a bereavement
- Social distancing measures
- Winter climate

Types

Emotional

When someone you were very close with is no longer there.

Social

When you feel like you're lacking a wider social network of friends, neighbours or peers.

Transient

A feeling that comes and goes.

Situational

Loneliness which you only feel at certain times like Sundays or bank holidays.

Chronic

When you feel lonely all or most of the time.



2

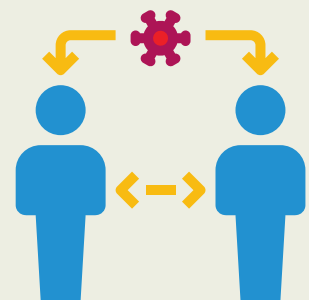
LONELINESS DURING A PANDEMIC

Who does it affect?

In short, everyone. From school cancellations and care home restrictions to those shielding, working from home or who have been furloughed or made redundant, COVID-19 has reduced our connections.

People of all ages experience loneliness – in fact, 16–24 year olds are the loneliest age group in the UK [1]. However, many of us have experienced loneliness (or long-term loneliness) for the first time due to COVID-19.

What does it look like?



Research has consistently shown that more people are feeling some form of loneliness during the pandemic – increasing from pre-pandemic figures of one in ten to one in four [2].

Winter is always a particularly tough time for those feeling loneliness. Darker, shorter and colder days have had a compounding impact on loneliness during a pandemic.

A recent study by the Office of National Statistics shows about one in four people were experiencing some form of loneliness at the start of November [3].

3

WAYS TO CONNECT THIS WINTER

The 3-Step Approach

by Marmalade Trust [4]

1

Acknowledge loneliness in yourself and others

It's not a pleasant emotion, but it is very common. Once you know what the feeling is, it's easier to address.

2

Identify what you or they need

Everyone is different! From the way we experience loneliness to how we like to connect, needs vary and change.

3

Take the appropriate action

Reach out to peers, family or friends, get in touch with a GP, find new ways to connect (telephone, online, socially distanced).

3

WAYS TO CONNECT THIS WINTER

Top tips for...

Yourself

- Start or join a virtual book or film club
- Organise a weekly video call with friends or family
- Join a virtual pub quiz
- Arrange to watch a film at the same time as a friend
- Spend some time in nature if able.
- Prioritise looking after yourself – make sure you are eating healthily, being as active as you can and sleeping well
- Go on a socially distanced walk with a loved one

Others

- Let them know you're there – send a letter, postcard or text
- Join a virtual club with them (e.g. cooking or crafts)
- Lend an ear – talk to family and friends about their experiences with loneliness
- Invite them for a socially distanced walk – some find this an easier way to have meaningful conversations
- Show them you care with small acts of kindness

3

WAYS TO CONNECT THIS WINTER

Top tips for...

Community outreach



- Start (or join) a WhatsApp or email group for your street – It's a great way to connect with your neighbours
- Post a letter under a neighbours' door to ask if they need help with groceries or errands
- Have a cup of tea with your neighbour (while maintaining appropriate distance)
- Reach out to a local charity and volunteer your support
- Reach out to a neighbour who is experiencing loneliness or isolation
- If you're able to get out, smile and say hello to passers-by
- Make use of your community – many small local food suppliers will still be open and need our support

4

FURTHER RESOURCES

- **The Great Winter Get Together**
Join their campaign to face loneliness
- **Marmalade Trust**
Check out their latest tools and advice
- **The Jo Cox Foundation**
Their loneliness directory signposts to support
- **Age UK**
Take part in their telephone befriending service
- **Mind UK**
Join their online community, Side by Side
- **Samaritans**
Call their 24/7 helpline
- **The Silver Line**
Call their elderly helpline
- **Campaign to End Loneliness**
Find more resources on elderly loneliness
- **British Red Cross**
Access further resources on loneliness in young people
- **WaveLength**
Support a charity that provides media technology to lonely people in poverty

CONTACT US



@great_together
@marmaladetrust



@greatgettogether
@marmalade_trust



@greatgettogether
@marmaladetrust



hello@greatgettogether.org
info@marmaladetrust.org

REFERENCES

[1] BBC Radio 4, All In The Mind. "The Loneliness Experiment", 2018

[2] Mental Health Foundation, "Loneliness During Coronavirus", 2020

[3] BBC News, "Lockdown loneliness reaches record levels", 2020

[4] Marmalade Trust, "Three Step Approach"

UNDERSTANDING LONELINESS TOOLKIT

THE GREAT GET
TOGETHER.
INSPIRED BY JO COX

