

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

15TH - 19TH JUNE 2020

LONELINNESS
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Understanding loneliness one conversation at a time

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

SUPPORTER PACK

ONE LESS LONELY VOICE

Understanding loneliness one conversation at a time.

 LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

WHO WE ARE

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

We envision a society where anyone can talk freely and openly about loneliness - after all, it's a normal human emotion.

Marmalade Trust is the home of Loneliness Awareness Week, and we're proud to be working with some fantastic partners, including The Great Get Together and the Jo Cox Foundation.



WHAT IS LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK?

We started Loneliness Awareness Week (LAW) 4 years ago to raise awareness of loneliness and encourage people to speak about it openly.

It's a powerful message that resonates with many and each year LAW receives more and more attention. Last year 800 events took place and conversations about loneliness were taking place every 5 seconds!

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic instead of face-to-face events, we're hosting a virtual campaign called 'One Less Lonely Voice'. We are taking the 'one' out of loneliness, to signify one less lonely voice.

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

Our aim is to empower everyone to understand loneliness one conversation at a time. By building on our understanding, we can help ourselves and others to manage feelings of loneliness.

#LetsTalkLoneliness

HOW LONG
WILL IT LAST?

WHO
EXPERIENCES IT?

WHAT DOES IT
FEEL LIKE?

WHO
EXPERIENCES
IT?

THE LONELINESS GUIDE

ARE THERE
DIFFERENT
TYPES?

HOW CAN I
TALK ABOUT IT?

WHAT SHOULD I
DO ABOUT IT?

HAVE WE
ALWAYS FELT IT?

WHAT IS LONELINESS?

We all feel lonely at times – it's a normal human emotion. We're biologically wired for social contact, and loneliness is our signal that we need more.

The 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 [1].

WHY DO I FEEL LONELY EVEN WHEN I'M NOT ALONE?

You don't have to be on your own to feel lonely - you might feel lonely in a relationship or while spending time with friends or family – especially if you don't feel understood or cared for by the people around you. Other people might choose to be alone and live happily without much social contact.

Loneliness can also be characterised by its intensity, or how strongly it is felt, which can change from moment to moment and over different durations of time [2].

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LONELINESS?

There are different types, including:

- **Emotional loneliness** - When someone you were very close with is no longer there. This could be a partner or a close friend.
- **Social loneliness** - When you feel like you're lacking a wider social network of friends, neighbours or colleagues.
- **Transient loneliness** - A feeling that comes and goes.
- **Situational loneliness** - Loneliness which you only feel at certain times like Sundays, bank holidays or Christmas.
- **Chronic loneliness** - When you feel lonely all or most of the time.

WHO EXPERIENCES LONELINESS?

Most of us will experience loneliness at some point in our lives, regardless of age, circumstance and background. We all experience loneliness differently.

It's a common misconception that loneliness is limited to older people. In fact, it's now the 16-24 year olds who are the loneliest age group in the UK [3].

WHAT CAUSES LONELINESS?

There are key life points which will increase the likelihood of feeling lonely. Some examples are:

- Moving away from home
- Starting university or a new job
- Becoming a new parent
- A relationship break-up
- Suffering a bereavement
- Retirement

HAS LONELINESS ALWAYS BEEN AN ISSUE?

Human beings evolved to feel safest in groups, and as a result, we experience isolation as a physical state of emergency.

Imagine if you lived in a tribe and while you were out hunting, you found yourself alone. You'd be under serious threat without the protection of your group - your levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, would rocket up, and would stay raised until you're back with your tribe [4].



SHOULD WE CHANGE THE LANGUAGE AROUND LONELINESS?

Telling someone that you're lonely is an important step but it's also important to be mindful of how we talk about it.

We still use words like 'admitting' to and 'suffering' from, which can unintentionally add to the belief that something is wrong with us.

There is absolutely no shame in feeling lonely and changing the language around loneliness is a positive and liberating step forward. The more we talk about it, the more we normalise it and we can move towards a society where it can be spoken about openly.



CASE STUDY ALISON - 39



"I love spending time with my young kids. But some days I feel so lonely, which isn't a nice feeling. I signed myself up to some virtual parenting groups and I mentioned how I was feeling. Turns out, plenty of other parents felt similarly. I realised even though I was with my family all day, I felt lonely because I was yearning for some grown-up conversation and connection!"

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

JOIN IN ONLINE

We want to get everyone talking about loneliness, and to increase understanding one conversation at a time. By building on our understanding, we can help ourselves and others to manage feelings of loneliness.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Share a post about loneliness. Download and share our social media graphics. Or share your own experiences and some tips to help others.



BUILD YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Increase your understanding and help others feel more connected - check out the tips below for ways to do this, but of course you come up with your own too!



PLEDGE

You can sign our loneliness pledge on our website, or you can download our eye-catching pledge graphics and post them on your Facebook or Instagram stories. You could even tag friends who have helped you when you've felt lonely. The more people you can reach, the more people can join the conversation!

DOWNLOAD RESOURCES

Help us spread the word with posters, graphics and animations! Simply go online to download your materials here:

www.marmaladetrust.org/law-resources

CONNECT WITH US

Be sure to follow our social media pages, they're the best way to receive updates on the campaign in the lead up to the Loneliness Awareness Week. We'd love to see what you get up to during the week, so don't forget to tag us!



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BUILD YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Over the next few pages, we've put together some top tips for understanding loneliness and helping yourself and others feel more connected. If loneliness continues for some time, it can start to affect your health and wellbeing. In this case, it's important to reach out to your GP.

We have devised these tips with COVID-19 social distancing measures in mind. Please do make sure you adhere to the up-to-date guidance from the UK Government.

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

**UNDERSTANDING
LONELINESS**

AT HOME

LETS TALK LONELINESS

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

**SEND A LETTER
OR POSTCARD
TO SOMEONE
ISOLATING BY
THEMSELVES**

**SHARE YOUR
EXPERIENCES
OF LONELINESS
ON SOCIAL
MEDIA**

**ARRANGE TO
WATCH A FILM
AT THE SAME
TIME AS A
FRIEND AND
VIDEO CALL**

**ORGANISE A
WEEKLY VIDEO
CALL WITH
FRIENDS OR
FAMILY**

**PICK UP THE
PHONE AND
CALL OR TEXT
A FRIEND**

**ARRANGE A
VIDEO CALL
WITH
SOMEONE YOU
HAVEN'T SEEN
IN A WHILE**

**START OR JOIN
A VIRTUAL
BOOK CLUB,
FILM CLUB OR
PUB QUIZ**

**SOME PEOPLE
FIND TALKING
WHILE
WALKING
EASIER THAN
FACE TO FACE**



**UNDERSTANDING
LONELINESS**

**IN THE
COMMUNITY**

**START OR JOIN A WHATSAPP OR
EMAIL GROUP FOR YOUR STREET. IT'S
A GREAT WAY TO CONNECT WITH
YOUR NEIGHBOURS**

**ASK ISOLATING
NEIGHBOURS
IF THEY NEED
HELP WITH
GROCERIES OR
ERRANDS**

**HAVE A CUPPA
WITH A
NEIGHBOUR,
KEEPING THE
APPROPRIATE
DISTANCE**

**REACH OUT TO
A LOCAL
CHARITY AND
VOLUNTEER
YOUR
SUPPORT**

**REACH OUT TO
SOMEONE YOU
KNOW
EXPERIENCING
LONELINESS
OR ISOLATION**



**SHOP LOCAL, IT
CAN BE A
FRIENDLY
PLACE TO SAY
HELLO**

**SMILE AND SAY
HELLO TO
PASSERS BY.
EVEN FROM A
DISTANCE IT
CAN MAKE A BIG
DIFFERENCE.**

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

**UNDERSTANDING
LONELINESS**

AT SCHOOL

LETS TALK LONELINESS

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

**STORY TIME!
READ A BOOK
TOGETHER
ABOUT
LONELINESS**

**ASK STUDENTS
TO SHARE
WHAT THEY
KNOW ABOUT
LONELINESS**

**EXPLORE
WHEN OR WHY
PEOPLE MIGHT
FEEL LONELY**

**DISCUSS WHAT
MIGHT HELP
SOMEONE
WHO IS
FEELING
LONELY**

**DRAW A
PICTURE OF
WHAT
LONELINESS
FEELS LIKE**

**WRITE LETTERS
TO PEOPLE
WHO ARE
ISOLATING IN
THE
COMMUNITY**

**REMEMBER TO
DISCUSS
LONELINESS
OPENLY AND
POSITIVELY.
LONELINESS IS
A NORMAL
EMOTION AND
THE STIGMA
SURROUNDING
IT TENDS TO
DEVELOP
WHEN WE GET
OLDER**



LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

**UNDERSTANDING
LONELINESS**

AT WORK

LETS TALK LONELINESS

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

**HOST A
WEEKLY
SOCIAL TO
CATCH UP
WITH
COLLEAGUES**

**ENCOURAGE
EMPLOYEES TO
REACH OUT TO
HR IF THEY ARE
FEELING
LONELY**



**'MEET' A
COLLEAGUE
FOR A VIRTUAL
COFFEE OR
LUNCH**

**ASK A
COLLEAGUE
HOW THEY'RE
FINDING THE
CHANGE IN
ROUTINE**

**SPEND SOME
TIME BUILDING
STRONGER
EMPLOYEE AND
TEAM
RELATION -
SHIPS BY
GETTING TO
KNOW EACH
OTHER BETTER**

**EMAIL SUPPORTERS OR CLIENTS TO
LET THEM KNOW WHAT YOU'RE
DOING TO COMBAT LONELINESS
AND INCREASE UNDERSTANDING**

**WE HOPE YOU HAVE BEEN
INSPIRED TO TAKE PART IN
THIS YEARS CAMPAIGN!**

LETS TALK LONELINESS

REFERENCES

- [1] Perlman, Daniel, and L. Anne Peplau. "Toward a social psychology of loneliness." *Personal relationships* 3 (1981): 31-56.
- [2] Campaign to End Loneliness. "About Loneliness". Access via: campaigntoendloneliness.org/about-loneliness/
- [3] BBC Radio 4, All In The Mind. "The Loneliness Experiment". Access via: seed.manchester.ac.uk/education/research/impact/bbc-loneliness-experiment/
- [4] Johann Hari. "Lost Connections: Why You're Depressed and How to Find Hope." (2019)

WE UNDERSTAND THAT **LONELINESS** IS A NORMAL EMOTION

Loneliness Awareness Week
15th - 19th June 2020

Understanding loneliness one conversation at a time
#LetsTalkLoneliness

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AWARENESS WEEK