

Loneliness

Loneliness is not about a lack of people around you. It is not about solitude and the peace that comes being comfortable with yourself. Loneliness can be described as the feeling of not being seen, heard, known or understood. Blood cancer / disorder can amplify these feelings. The physical and mental health effects of loneliness are significant. Meaningful connection and knowing support is there is the antidote to loneliness.

Questions to consider

1. Do what people see on the outside reflect what is going on inside for you?
2. What do you do to keep connection with nature / with others?
3. Who can you be most yourself with?
4. Consider a time when you experienced solitude, felt most at peace. What did that look like? What did that feel like?
5. Who or where can you turn to for support / company?

*"You can't stop the waves,
but you can learn how to surf."*

Anonymous



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Helpful hints and tips

- Communication is KEY
- Stay connected – continued isolation is detrimental to your health. Say 'Hi' to people when you are out and about
- Reserve isolation for medical reasons e.g. neutropaenia / unwell people
- Be selective - choose people or activities that bring joy or comfort
- Ditch unhelpful feelings of guilt
- Set time limits on social events to what you can manage e.g. attend for 30 mins instead of a whole afternoon or day
- Keep things on your terms - meet for coffee instead of dinner, go for a walk outside instead of going to their house etc.
- Manage your commitment e.g. casual vs. annual gym membership

"Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending."

Carl Bard

Resources

Solaris Cancer Care (WA)

Mind (UK)

The simple cure for loneliness
(13 minutes)

click on each resource to follow the link



- Shift your thinking – notice 3 things you appreciate each day & practice gratitude
- Talk to a professional - be open to asking for help and learning new strategies
- Share the good and the not so good with trusted people
- See your family and grandchildren. Be sensible when they are unwell, but do not let fear of infection keep you from the people you love
- Try different things to connect with others that match your time and energy e.g. facetime / send a postcard / walk in park / watch TV together
- Think bigger – venture to places where others share your interests or experiences e.g. book group / community house / walking club / U3A / a cause you support

