

Your life is in your hands, you are the captain of your ship. If you are lonely or isolated first you need to consider who says you are isolated and lonely you or is it a member of your family or carer or other professional. If yes then:

First step is to Understand

Why are you lonely, what has happened to bring you to this day,

What does being lonely mean for you, is that you are alone and you enjoy being alone or do you feel sad

How do you know you are lonely, are you sad? Do you miss people that are no longer there? Is it because you have become stuck in a rut? a continuous ground hog day. Do you want to get out of it?

Do not assume because someone is alone that they are lonely. Sometimes people can be lonely in a family because everyone is busy with their lives that they forget the grandparents. Some people like their own company and their own time. So it is important to find out if they are lonely.

If Yes then:

Second step make a Choice

Make a mission of meeting people

Do you have a hobby what do you like to do, would you like to learn a new hobby?

Where are the people, libraries, clubs, community centres, learning centres?

Consider where and how will you meet them?

Third step is to Act

What do you need to do to make it happen?

Arrange transport, ring a friend, find local befriender service

Organise or improve your home, keep busy, cooking, invite friends over, take it in turns to have tea at each other homes

Arrange to meet friends once a week for a chat or walk or share your hobbies
learn from one another

- **House bound?** Do you have access to internet can you face time family and friends Learn how to use a computer or a smart phone so that you can face time family and friends. Learn how to phone friends for free on wassap or other apps that are available
Can you download ebooks

Do you like listening to music?

Can you download music on to your phone? Can you find organisations to visit you at home or arrange for transport to take you somewhere?

Get a pet

Be grateful

Learn to be happy in your own company, but reach out to meet others.

- Do something nice for someone you don't know whenever you can.
- Say hello to a stranger
- Visit a senior citizens centre or home. Bring some doughnuts, cookies or cakes and watch their faces light up.
- **You will feel amazing**
- Many of these people don't have family who can visit often. They will be happy to see you.
- Go for walks, join a local walking group or walk alone and keep healthy, get some Vitamin D. Many doctors believe that 30 minutes of brisk walking improves our physical health, reduces depression
- Smile more at people you see - this includes your own reflection in the mirror.
- Watch your favourite comedy show and laugh out loud.
- Play games and puzzles or crosswords It will brighten your day and brighten the day of others around you. Doing good for others often leads to meeting new people and definitely supports feelings of wellbeing no doubt. Do

something for others, volunteer a couple of hours each week working for a cause you believe in. The volunteer centre can help you to find a volunteering role that you will enjoy.

- Join a group take up a hobby, if there is no group for your interests then start a new group and invite others.
- Keep a routine, eat well, exercise or at least keep moving the best you can. Remember, you are a human being, with a life, live it!

Questions: **What happens when no one takes care of older person who was left without food for days and no one did anything?**

A: If someone is in need of social or health care then you would need to contact social services.

But nobody knew about this lady's needs

A: It is difficult when individuals slip through the net that is why it is important that you are able to join a group activity and know your neighbours so that you can help them and they can help you. It is all of society's responsibility to take care of one another. Social services will do their part but we have to be more aware too. Thank fully her neighbour and you are now working towards helping this lady.

What can we do to reduce isolation for people who can't get out of the house?

Contact organisations such as Age Concern to find out about schemes to take people out of their homes for the day or befriender schemes where a volunteer may visit someone in their home.

Where can we find you?

We are just around the corner in Osborne Street, right next to the Herschel Medical Centre, in the old Lloyds pharmacy. You are most welcome to come and register to volunteer, 10.00 am to 3.00pm

Enjoy the rest of your morning. I am sorry that I have to leave but I am delivering training on Wellbeing and Resilience for our volunteers, the topic today is about happiness and keeping a balanced life.

Can we come to your Wellbeing training?

If you are a registered volunteer you may access our training, just because you are older does not mean you cannot volunteer. We have volunteers in the 70's and 80's the important thing is to keep enjoying your life and finding things to keep you happy and motivated.